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THE

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

LEIGH HUNT;

WITH

REMINISCENCES

OF FRIENDS AND CONTEMPORARIES.

" Most men, when drawn to speak about themselves,
Are mov'd by little and little to say more
Than they first dreamt; until at last they blush,
And can but hope to find secret excuse
In the self-knowledge of their auditors."

WALTER SCOTT'S *Old Play.*

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

XX. i. 1

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PREFACE.

BEFORE the reader looks any further into these volumes, I would entreat him to bear in mind *two things.*

And I say "entreat," and put those two words in italics, not in order to give emphasis to the truth (for truth is, or ought to be, its own emphasis) but to show him how anxious I am on the points, and to impress them the more strongly on his attention.

The first is, that the work, whatever amusement he may find in it (and I hope, for the publishers' sake, as well as my own, that it is not destitute of amusement) was commenced under circumstances which committed me to its execution, and would have been abandoned at almost every step, had those circumstances allowed.

The second is, that the life being that of a man of letters, and topics of a different sort failing me towards the conclusion, I found myself impelled to

dilate more on my writings, than it would otherwise have entered my head to contemplate.

It is true, that autobiography, and autocriticism also, have abounded of late years in literary quarters. The French appear to have set the example. Goldoni and Alfieri followed it. Goethe and Chateaubriand followed them. Coleridge's *Literary Life* is professedly autocritical. With autocriticism Wordsworth answered his reviewers. And editions of Collected Works have derived new attractions from whatever accounts of them their authors have been induced to supply.

Example itself, however, while it furnishes excuse in proportion to the right which a man has to follow it, becomes reason for alarm when he knows not the extent of his warrant. Others will have to determine that point, whatever he may be disposed to think of it; and perhaps he may be disposed not to think of it at all, but wholly to eschew its necessity. Such, at all events, was the case with myself. I would have entirely waived the autobiography, if a sense of justice to others would have permitted me to do so. My friend and publisher, Mr. Smith, will satisfy any one on that head, who is not acquainted with my veracity. But Mr. Smith's favourable opinion of me, and his own kindly feeling, led him to think it would be so much the reverse of a disadvantage to me in the

end, that he took the handsomest means of making the task as easy to me as he could, through a long period of engagements over due, and of interruptions from ill health; and though I can never forget the pain of mind which some of the passages cost me, yet I would now, for both our sakes, willingly be glad that the work has been done, provided the public think it worth reading, and are content with this explanation. The opportunity, indeed, which it has given me of recalling some precious memories, of correcting some crude judgments, and, in one respect, of discharging a duty that must otherwise have been delayed, make me persuade myself on the whole, that I *am* glad. So I shall endeavour, with the reader's help, to remain under that comfortable impression. I will liken myself to an actor, who though commencing his part on the stage with a gout or a headache, or, perhaps, even with a bit of heartache, finds his audience so willing to be pleased, that he forgets his infirmity as he goes, and ends with being glad that he has appeared.

One thing, perhaps, may be said in greater excuse for me, than for most autobiographers; namely, that I have been so accustomed during the greater part of my life to talk to the reader in my own person, or at least to compare notes with him by implication on all sorts of personal subjects, that I fall

more naturally into this kind of fire-side strain than most writers, and therefore do not present the public so abrupt an image of individuality.

So much for talking of myself at all. The autocriticism I would rank, at due distance, in the category of those explanations of their thoughts and feelings, their designs, or idiosyncrasies, with which poets have occasionally accompanied their verses, from the times of Dante and Petrarch downwards. At least, this was the example, or instinctive principle, on which I acted, owing to my intimacy with the old Italian writers, and to my love of the way in which their prose falls a talking of their poetry; for I have not entered into the nature of such autocriticism itself, or given my reasons as I might have done, and I think to good effect, for the desirableness of poets giving an account of their art. I came unexpectedly on the subject, while at a loss for my next autobiographical topic; and I was so perplexed what to find, that I had not time even to make choice of my instances. I would make the same excuse for going into details on other points, or on any points, especially those most relating to myself; for I have lived long enough to discover, that autobiography may not only be a very distressing but a very puzzling task, and throw the writer into such doubts as to what he should or

should not say, as totally to confuse him. What conscience bids him utter, for the sake of the world, may be clear enough; and in obeying that, he must find his consolation for all chances of injury to himself.

The autobiography includes all that seemed worth retaining of what has before been written in connection with it, and this has received the benefit of a maturer judgment. The political articles from the *Examiner*, curious from the consequences attending them, are republished for the first time; several hitherto unpublished letters of Thomas Moore appear in the third volume, in addition to those which the public have already seen; and the whole work will be new to by far the greater number of readers, not only because of the new reading generations that have come up, but because times are altered, and writers are willingly heard now, in the comparative calm of parties, and during the anxiety of all honest men to know what it is best to think and to do, whom, twenty or thirty years ago, every means would have been taken to suppress.

What may be said for the *tergeminus honos* of the portraits, for my having suffered myself to be made "three gentlemen at once," I do not so well know; unless the curiosity of catching a fellow-creature in this extraordinary act of simultaneousness, and the

being enabled to see how any one else might look under the like presentment of three different periods of life, may be thought a reasonable excuse for it. At all events, these are perils which valiant publishers tell autobiographers they are bound to undergo; so I have acquiesced, as people are accustomed to do, who are willing to be thought valiant in valiant company.

Let me close this preface with thanking two members of a profession, which literature has always reason to thank and to love; the one my old and distinguished friend Dr. Southwood Smith, the friend of his species, whose attentions to my health enabled me to proceed with the work; and the other, my new and, if I am not greatly mistaken, hereafter to be distinguished friend, Dr. Francis Sibson, a young physician, who is not unworthy to be named at the same time, and who did me the like cordial service when I could no longer prevail on myself to interrupt a public benefactor.

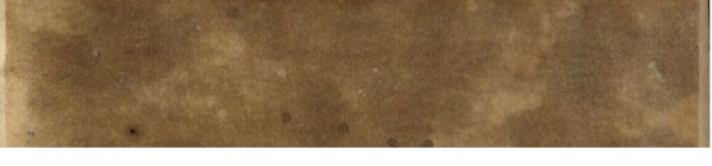
And so Heaven bless the reader, and all of us; and enable us to compare notes some day in some Elysian corner of intuition, where we shall be in no need of prefaces and explanations, and only wonder how any of us could have missed the secret of universal knowledge and happiness.

READER (smiling and staring about him).—Where is it?

AUTHOR.—Ah, we must get into the confines of Elysium first, in order to know.

READER.—And where is Elysium?

AUTHOR.—Why, a good old Divine of the Church of England says, the approach to it is called Temper. —"Heaven," says Dr. Whichcote, "is first a temper, and then a place."



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ERRATA IN VOL. I.

Page 9, *for* over with blood, *read* over blood.
74, *for* Saviglia, *read* Seviglia.
76, *for* cuckoo's song, *read* cuckoo song.
96, *for* six hundred, *read* seven hundred.
112, (first and second line) *dele* the words, I have spoken of, and which.
121, *for* Meaer *read* Meader.
130, *dele* the word "But" at the beginning of the paragraph.
161, *for* corporeal, *read* corporal.
192, *for* resembles, *read* resembled.
195, *for* apophthegm, *read* repartee.
264, *for* writings, *read* writing.

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49, *for* Beog, *read* Berg; and *for* Beineres, *read* Bessieres.
295, *for* moan, *read* moon.

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17, *for* that, *read* that day.
61, *for* we recite, *read* he recite.
62, *for* what would, *read* what could.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LEIGH HUNT.

CHAPTER I.

THE AUTHOR'S PROGENITORS.

Fetching a man's mind from his cradle.—Transmission of family faces and qualities.—Childhood a favourite theme in after-life.—The Author's ancestors and father.—Perils of the latter during the American Revolution.—Compliment paid him by the father of Sheridan.—His answer to a Bishop, and general character and career.—Becomes tutor to the nephew of the Duke of Chandos.—Accidental death of that nobleman, and affecting end of his Duchess.—Misfortunes in the author's family.—His mother and her connexions.—Her behaviour during her voyage to England; admirable conduct on various other occasions; and love of the sunset during her decline.

THE circumstances that led to this Autobiography will transpire in the course of it. Suffice it to say for the present, that a more involuntary production it would be difficult to conceive; though I trust it will not be found destitute of the entertainment which any true account of experiences in the life of a human being must of necessity, perhaps, contain.

I claim no importance for anything which I have done or undergone, but on grounds common to the interests of all, and to the willing sympathy of my brother-lovers of books. Should I be led at any time into egotisms of a nature that seem to think otherwise, I blush beforehand for the mischance, and beg it to be considered as alien from my habits of reflection. I have had vanities enough in my day; and, as the reader will see, became aware of them. If I have any remaining, I hope they are only such as nature kindly allows to most of us, in order to comfort us in our regrets and infirmities. And the more we could look even into these, the less we should find in them for self-complacency, apart from considerations that respect the whole human race.

There is a phrase, for instance, of "fetching a man's mind from his cradle." But does the mind begin at that point of time? Does it begin even with his parents? I was looking once, in company with Mr. Hazlitt, at an exhibition of pictures in the British Institution, when casting my eyes on the portrait of an officer in the dress of the time of Charles the Second, I exclaimed, "What a likeness to B. M.!" (a friend of ours). It turned out to be his ancestor, Lord Sandwich. Mr. Hazlitt took me across the room, and showed me the portrait of a celebrated judge, who lived at the same period.

"This," said he, "is Judge So-and-so; and his living representative (he is now dead) has the same face and the same passions." The Hazlitt then of the same age might have been the same Hazlitt that was standing with me before the picture; and such may have been the case with the writer of these pages. There is a famous historical bit of transmission called the "Austrian lip;" and faces, which we consider peculiar to individuals, are said to be common in whole districts: such as the Boccacio face in one part of Tuscany, and the Dante face in another. I myself have seen, in the Genoese territory, many a face like that of the Bonapartes; and where a race has strong blood in it, or whatever may constitute the requisite vital tendency, it is probable that the family likeness might be found to prevail in the humblest as well as highest quarters. There are families, indeed, of yeomen, who are said to have flourished like old oaks, in one and the same spot, since the times of the Anglo-Saxons. I am descended, both by father's and mother's side, from adventurous people, who left England for the New World, and whose descendants have retained the spirit of adventure to this day. The chances are, that in some respects I am identical with some half-dozen, or perhaps twenty of these; and that the mind of some cavalier of the days of the Stuarts, or

some gentleman or yeoman, or "roving blade," of those of the Edwards and Henrys,—perhaps the gallant merchant-man, "Henry Hunt" of the old ballad —mixed, alas! with a sedentary difference—is now writing these lines, ignorant of his former earthly self and of his present! I say earthly, for I speak it with no disparagement to the existence of an individual "soul,"—a point in which I am a firm believer; nor would it be difficult to reconcile one opinion with the other in ears accustomed to such arguments; but I must not enter upon them here.

The name of Hunt is found among the gentry, but I suspect it is oftener a plebeian name; and though my immediate progenitors were clergymen, and Bryan Edwards's History of the West Indies contains a map of Barbados (their native place) with one of the residences designated by it—apparently a minor estate—yet it does not appear either in the old map in the History of Barbados by Ligon, or in the lists of influential or other persons in that by Sir Robert Schomburgck. There is a "Richard Hunt, Esq.," in the list of subscribers to Hughes's Natural History of Barbados, which contains also the name of Dr. Hunt, who was Hebrew and Arabic professor at Oxford, and whose genealogy the biographer cannot discover. Perhaps the good old oriental scholar belongs to our stock, and originated my love of the

Arabian Nights! The tradition in the family is that we descend from Tory cavaliers (a wide designation), who fled to the West Indies from the ascendancy of Cromwell; and on the female side, amidst a curious mixture of quakers and soldiers, we derive ourselves not only from gentry, but from kings—that is to say, *Irish* kings!—personages (not to say it disrespectfully to the wit and misfortunes of the sister-island) who rank pretty much on a par with the negro chief, surrounded by half a dozen lords in ragged shirts, who asked the traveller what his brother kings thought of him in Europe. I take our main stock to have been mercantile.

I have begun my book with my progenitors and with childhood, partly because "order gives all things view," partly because, whatever we may assume as we grow up respecting the "dignity of manhood," we all feel that childhood was a period of great importance to us. Most men recur to it with delight. They are in general very willing to dilate upon it, especially if they meet with an old school-fellow; and therefore, on a principle of reciprocity, and as I have long considered myself a kind of playmate and fellow-disciple with persons of all times of life (for none of us, unless we are very silly or naughty boys indeed, ever leave off learning in some school or other), I shall suppose I have been listening to some other

young gentleman of sixty or seventy years of age over his wine, and that I am now going to relate about half as much respecting my existence as he has told us of his own.

My grandfather, himself the son, I believe, of a clergyman, was Rector of St. Michael's in Bridgetown, Barbados. He was a good-natured man, and recommended the famous Lauder to the mastership of the free-school there; influenced, no doubt, partly by his pretended repentance, and partly by sympathy with his Toryism. Lauder is said to have been discharged for misconduct. I never heard that; but I have heard that his appearance was decent, and that he had a wooden leg: which is an anti-climax befitting his history. My grandfather was admired and beloved by his parishioners for the manner in which he discharged his duties. He died at an early age, in consequence of a fever taken in the hot and damp air, while officiating incessantly at burials during a mortality. His wife, who was an O'Brien, or rather Bryan, very proud of her descent from the kings aforesaid (or of the kings from *her*), was as good-natured and beloved as her husband, and very assiduous in her attentions to the negroes and to the poor, for whom she kept a set of medicines, like my Lady Bountiful. They had two children besides my father; Ann Courthope, who died unmarried; and

Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Dayrell, Esq. of Barbados, father by a first marriage of the late barrister of that name. I mention both of these ladies, because they will come among my portraits.

To these their children, the worthy Rector and his wife were a little too indulgent. When my father was to go to the American Continent to school, the latter dressed up her boy in a fine suit of laced clothes, such as we see on the little gentlemen in Hogarth; but so splendid and costly, that when the good pastor beheld him, he was moved to utter an expostulation. Objection, however, soon gave way before the pride of all parties; and my father set off for school, ready spoilt, with plenty of money to spoil him more.

He went to college at Philadelphia, and became the scapegrace who smuggled in the wine, and bore the brunt of the tutors. My father took the degree of Master of Arts, both at Philadelphia and New York. When he spoke the farewell oration on leaving college, two young ladies fell in love with him, one of whom he afterwards married. He was fair and handsome, with delicate features, a small aquiline nose, and blue eyes. To a graceful address he joined a remarkably fine voice, which he modulated with great effect. It was in reading, with this voice, the poets and other classics of England, that he com-

pleted the conquest of my mother's heart. He used to spend his evenings in this manner with her and her family,—a noble way of courtship; and my grandmother became so hearty in his cause, that she succeeded in carrying it against her husband, who wished his daughter to marry a wealthy neighbour.

My father was intended, I believe, to carry on the race of clergymen, as he afterwards did; but he went, in the first instance, into the law. The Americans united the practice of attorney and barrister. My father studied the law under articles to one of the chief persons in the profession; and afterwards practised with distinction himself. At this period (by which time all my brothers, now living, were born) the Revolution broke out; and he entered with so much zeal into the cause of the British Government, that, besides pleading for loyalists with great fervour at the bar, he wrote pamphlets equally full of party warmth, which drew on him the popular odium. His fortunes then came to a crisis in America. Early one morning, a great concourse of people appeared before his house. He came out,—or was brought. They put him into a cart prepared for the purpose (conceive the anxiety of his wife!), and, after parading him about the streets, were joined by a party of the revolutionary soldiers with drum and fife. The multitude then went with him to the

house of Dr. Kearsley, a staunch Tory, who shut up the windows, and endeavoured to prevent their getting in. The doctor had his hand pierced by a bayonet, as it entered between the shutters behind which he had planted himself. He was dragged out and put into the cart, all over with blood; but he lost none of his intrepidity; for he answered their reproaches and outrage with vehement reprehensions; and, by way of retaliation on the "Rogue's March," struck up "God save the King." My father gave way as little as the doctor. He would say nothing that was dictated to him, nor renounce a single opinion; but, on the other hand, he maintained a tranquil air, and endeavoured to persuade his companion not to add to their irritation. This was to no purpose. Dr. Kearsley continued infuriate, and more than once fainted from loss of blood and the violence of his feelings. The two loyalists narrowly escaped tarring and feathering. A tub of tar, which had been set in a conspicuous place in one of the streets for that purpose, was overturned by an officer intimate with our family. My father, however, did not escape entirely from personal injury. One of the stones thrown by the mob gave him such a severe blow on the head, as not only laid him swooning in the cart, but dimmed his sight for life, so as to oblige him from that time to wear spectacles. At length,

after being carried through every street in Philadelphia, the two captives were deposited, in the evening, in a prison in Market-street. What became of Dr. Kearsley, I cannot say. My father, by means of a large sum of money given to the sentinel who had charge of him, was enabled to escape at midnight. He went immediately on board a ship in the Delaware, that belonged to my grandfather, and was bound for the West Indies. She dropped down the river that same night; and my father went first to Barbados, and afterwards to England, where he settled.

My mother was to follow my father as soon as possible, which she was not able to do for many months. The last time she had seen him, he was a lawyer and a partisan, going out to meet an irritated populace. On her arrival in England, she beheld him in a pulpit, a clergyman, preaching tranquillity. When my father came over, he found it impossible to continue his profession as a lawyer. Some actors, who heard him read, advised him to go on the stage; but he was too proud for that, and went into the Church. He was ordained by the celebrated Lowth, then Bishop of London; and he soon became so popular that the Bishop sent for him, and remonstrated against his preaching so many charity sermons. He said it was ostentatious in a clergyman, and that

he saw his name in too many advertisements. My father thought it strange, but acquiesced. It is true, he preached a great many of these sermons. I am told, that for a whole year he did nothing else; and perhaps there was something in his manner a little startling to the simplicity of the Church of England. I remember, when he came to that part of the Litany where the reader prays for his deliverance "in the hour of death and at the day of judgment," he used to make a pause at the word "death," and drop his voice on the rest of the sentence. The effect was striking; but repetition must have hurt it. I am afraid it was a little theatrical. His delivery, however, was so much admired by those who thought themselves the best judges, that Thomas Sheridan, father of the late Sheridan, came up to him one day after service, in the vestry, and complimented him on having profited so well from his Treatise on Reading the Liturgy. My father was obliged to tell him that he had never seen it.

I do not know whether it was Lowth, but it was some bishop, to whom my father one day, in the midst of a warm discussion, being asked "if he knew who he was?" replied, with a bow, "Yes, my lord; dust and ashes." Doubtless the clergyman was warm and imprudent. In truth, he made a great mistake when he entered the profession. By the nature of

the tenure, it was irretrievable; and his whole life after was a series of errors, arising from the unsuitability of his position. He was fond of divinity; but it was as a speculator, and not as a dogmatist, or one who takes upon trust. He was ardent in the cause of Church and State; but here he speculated too, and soon began to modify his opinions, which got him the ill-will of the Government. He delighted his audiences in the pulpit; so much so, that he had crowds of carriages at the door. One of his congregations had an engraving made of him; and a lady of the name of Cooling, who was member of another, left him by will the sum of 500*l.*, as a testimony of the pleasure and advantage she had derived from his discourses.

But unfortunately, after delighting his hearers in the pulpit, he would delight some of them a little too much over the table. He was extremely lively and agreeable; was full of generous sentiments; could flatter without grossness: had stories to tell of lords whom he knew; and when the bottle was to circulate, it did not stand with him. All this was dangerous to a West Indian who had an increasing family, and was to make his way in the Church. It was too much for him; and he added another to the list of those who, though they might suffice equally for themselves and others in a more con-

siderate and contented state of society, and seem born to be the delights of it, are only lost and thrown out in a system of things, which, by going upon the ground of individual aggrandizement, compels dispositions of a more sociable and reasonable nature either to become parties concerned, or be ruined in the refusal. It is doubtless incumbent on a husband and father to be careful under all circumstances: and it is very easy for most people to talk of the necessity of being so, and to recommend it to others, especially when they have been educated to that habit. Let those fling the first stone, who, with real inclination and talent for other things (for the inclination may not be what they take it for), confine themselves industriously to the duties prescribed them. There are more victims to errors committed by society themselves, than society suppose.

But I grant that a man is either bound to tell them so, or to do as they do. My father was always, theoretically speaking, both for the good of the world, and for that of his family (I remember a printed proposal which he drew up for an academy, to be entitled the "Cosmopolitical Seminary"); but he had neither uneasiness enough in his blood, nor, perhaps, sufficient strength in his convictions, to bring his speculations to bear; and as to the pride of cutting a figure above his neighbours, which so many men

mistake for a better principle of action, he could dispense with that. As it was, he should have been kept at home in Barbados. He was a true exotic, and ought not to have been transplanted. He might have preached there, and quoted Horace, and been gentlemanly and generous, and drunk his claret, and no harm done. But in a bustling, commercial state of society, where the enjoyment, such as it is, consists in the bustle, he was neither very likely to succeed, nor to meet with a good construction, nor to end his pleasant ways with pleasing either the world or himself.

It was in the pulpit of Bentinck Chapel, Lisson Green, Paddington, that my mother found her husband officiating. He published a volume of sermons preached there, in which there is little but elegance of diction and a graceful morality. His delivery was the charm; and, to say the truth, he charmed everybody but the owner of the chapel, who looked upon rent as by far the most eloquent production of the pulpit. The speculation ended with the preacher being horribly in debt. Friends, however, were lavish of their assistance. Three of my brothers were sent to school; the other, at her earnest entreaty, went to live (which he did for some years) with Mrs. Spencer, a sister (I think) of Sir Richard Worsley, and a delicious little old woman, the delight of all the children of her acquaintance.

My father and mother took breath, in the mean time, under the friendly roof of Mr. West the painter, who had married her aunt. The aunt and niece were much of an age, and both fond of books. Mrs. West, indeed, ultimately became a martyr to them; for the physician declared that she lost the use of her limbs by sitting in-doors.

From Newman-street my father went to live in Hampstead-square, whence he occasionally used to go and preach at Southgate. The then Duke of Chandos had a seat in the neighbourhood of Southgate. He heard my father preach, and was so pleased with him that he requested him to become tutor to his nephew, Mr. Leigh, which my father did, and remained with his Grace's family for several years. The Duke was Master of the Horse, and originated the famous epithet of "heaven-born minister," applied to Mr. Pitt, which occasioned a good deal of raillery. I have heard my father describe him as a man of great sweetness of nature and good breeding. He was the grandson of Pope and Swift's Duke of Chandos. He died in 1789, and left a widow, who survived him for several years in a state of mental alienation. I mention this circumstance, because I think I have heard it said in our family, that her derangement was owing to a piece of thoughtlessness, the notice of

which may serve as a caution. She was a woman of great animal spirits; and happening to thrust aside the Duke's chair, when he was going to sit down, the consequences were such that, being extremely attached to him, she could never forgive herself, but lost her husband and senses at once. The Duchess had already been married to a gentleman of the name of Elletson. She was daughter of Sir Richard Gamon, and mother of an heiress, who carried the title of Chandos into the Grenville family.

To be tutor in a ducal family is one of the roads to a bishoprick. My father was thought to be in the highest way to it. He was tutor in the house, not only of a duke, but of a state-officer, for whom the king had a personal regard. His manners were of the highest order; his principles in Church and State as orthodox, to all appearance, as could be wished; and he had given up flourishing prospects in America, for their sake; but his West Indian temperament spoiled all. He also, as he became acquainted with the Government, began to doubt its perfections; and the king, whose minuteness of information respecting the personal affairs of his subjects is well known, was most likely prepared with questions, which the duke was not equally prepared to answer.

My father, meanwhile, was getting more and more distressed. He removed to Hampstead a second time: from Hampstead he crossed the water; and the first room I have any recollection of is a prison.

Mr. West (which was doubly kind in a man by nature cautious and timid) again and again took the liberty of representing my father's circumstances to the king. It is well known that this artist enjoyed the confidence of his Majesty in no ordinary degree. The king would converse half a day at a time with him, while he was painting. His Majesty said he would speak to the bishops; and again, on a second application, he said my father should be provided for. My father himself also presented a petition; but all that was ever done for him, was the putting his name on the Loyalist Pension List for a hundred a-year;—a sum which he not only thought extremely inadequate for the loss of seven or eight times as much in America, a cheaper country, but which he felt to be a poor acknowledgment even for the active zeal he had evinced, and the things he had said and written; especially as it came late, and he was already involved. Small as it was, he was obliged to mortgage it; and from this time till the arrival of some relations from the West Indies, several years afterwards, he under-

went a series of mortifications and distresses, not without reason for self-reproach. Unfortunately for others, it might be said of him, what Lady Mary Wortley said of her kinsman, Henry Fielding, "that give him his leg of mutton and bottle of wine, and in the very thick of calamity he would be happy for the time being." Too well able to seize a passing moment of enjoyment, he was always scheming, never performing: always looking forward with some romantic plan which was sure to succeed, and never put in practice. I believe he wrote more titles of non-existing books than Rabelais. At length he found his mistake. My poor father! He grew deeply acquainted with prisons, and began to lose his graces and his good name, and became irritable with conscious error, and almost took hope out of the heart that loved him, and was too often glad to escape out of its society. Yet such an art had he of making his home comfortable when he chose, and of settling himself to the most tranquil pleasures, that if she could have ceased to look forward about her children, I believe, with all his faults, those evenings would have brought unmingled satisfaction to her, when, after settling the little apartment, brightening the fire, and bringing out the coffee, my mother knew that her husband was going to read Saurin or Barrow

to her, with his fine voice, and unequivocal enjoyment.

We thus struggled on between quiet and disturbance, between placid readings and frightful knocks at the door, and sickness, and calamity, and hopes, which hardly ever forsook us. One of my brothers went to sea,—a great blow to my poor mother. The next was articled to an attorney. My brother Robert became pupil to an engraver, and my brother John apprentice to Mr. Reynell, the printer, whose kindly manners, and deep iron voice, I well remember and respect. I had also a regard for the speaking trumpet, which ran all the way up his tall house, and conveyed his rugged whispers to his men. And his goodly wife, proud of her husband's grandfather, the bishop; never shall I forget how much I loved her for her portly smiles and good dinners, and how often she used to make me measure heights with her fair daughter Caroline, and found me wanting; which I thought not quite so hospitable.

As my father's misfortunes, in the first instance, were owing to feelings the most respected, so the causes of them subsequently (and the reader will be good enough to keep this in mind) were not unmixed with feelings of the kindest nature. He hampered himself greatly with becoming security

for other people; and, though unable to settle himself to any regular work, his pen was always at the service of those who required it for memorials or other helps. As to his children, he was healthy and sanguine, and always looked forward to being able to do something for them: and something for them he did, if it was only in grafting his animal spirits on the maternal stock, and setting them an example of independent thinking. But he did more. He really took care, considering his unbusiness-like habits, towards settling them in some line of life. It is our faults, not his, if we have not been all so successful as we might have been: at least it is no more his fault than that of the West Indian blood of which we all partake, and which has disposed all of us, more or less, to a certain aversion from business. And if it may be some vanity in us, at least it is no dishonour to our turn of mind, to hope, that we may have been the means of circulating more knowledge and entertainment in society, than if he had attained the bishoprick he looked for, and left us ticketed and labelled among the acquiescent.

Towards the latter part of his life, my father's affairs were greatly retrieved by the help of his sister, Mrs. Dayrell, who came over with a property from Barbados. My aunt was generous; part of her

property came among us also by a marriage; and my father's West Indian sun was again warm upon him. On his sister's death, to be sure, his struggles recommenced, though nothing in comparison to what they had been. Recommence, however, they did; and yet so sanguine was he in his intentions to the last, and so accustomed had my mother been to try to believe in him, and to persuade herself she did, that not long before she died he made the most solemn promises of amendment, which by chance I could not help overhearing, and which she received with a tenderness and a tone of joy, the remembrance of which brings the tears into my eyes. My father had one taste well suited to his profession, and in him, I used to think, remarkable. He was very fond of sermons; which he was rarely tired of reading, or my mother of hearing. I have mentioned the effect which these used to have upon her. When she died, he could not bear to think she was dead; yet retaining, in the midst of his tears, his indestructible tendency to seize on a cheering reflection, he turned his very despair into consolation; and in saying "She is not dead, but sleeps," I verily believe the image became almost a literal thing with him. Besides his fondness for sermons, he was a great reader of the Bible. His copy of it is scored with manuscript; and I believe he read a portion of

it every morning to the last, let him have been as right or as wrong as he pleased for the rest of the day. This was not hypocrisy; it was habit, and real fondness: though, while he was no hypocrite, he was not, I must confess, remarkable for being explicit about himself; nor did he cease to dogmatize in a sort of official manner upon faith and virtue, lenient as he thought himself bound to be to particular instances of frailty. To young people, who had no secrets from him, he was especially indulgent, as I have good reason to know. He delighted to show his sense of a candour in others, which I believe he would have practised himself, had he been taught it early. For many years before his death, he had greatly relaxed in the orthodoxy of his religious opinions. Both he and my mother had become Unitarians. They were also Universalists, and great admirers of Mr. Winchester, particularly my mother.* My father was willing, however, to

* "The Universalists cannot, properly speaking, be called a distinct sect, as they are frequently found scattered amongst various denominations. They are so named from holding the benevolent opinion, that all mankind, nay, even the demons themselves, will be finally restored to happiness, through the mercy of Almighty God."—*History of All Religions and Religious Ceremonies*, page 263. What an impiety towards "Almighty God," that anybody could ever have thought the reverse!

hear all sides of the question, and used to visit the chapels of the most popular preachers of all denominations. His favourite among them, I think, was Mr. Worthington, who preached at a chapel in Long Acre, and had a strong natural eloquence. Politics and divinity occupied almost all the conversation that I heard at our fire-side. It is a pity my father had been so spoilt a child, and had strayed so much out of his sphere; for he could be contented with little. He was one of the last of the gentry who retained the old fashion of smoking. He indulged in it every night before he went to bed, which he did at an early hour; and it was pleasant to see him sit, in his tranquil and gentlemanly manner, and relate anecdotes of "my Lord North" and the Rockingham administration, interspersed with those mild puffs and urbane resumptions of the pipe. How often have I thought of him under this aspect, and longed for the state of society that might have encouraged him to be more successful! Had he lived twenty years longer he would have thought it was coming. He died in the year 1809, aged fifty-seven, and was buried in the churchyard in Bishopsgate-street. I remember they quarrelled over his coffin for the perquisites of the candles; which put me upon a great many reflections, both on him and on the world.

My grandfather, by my mother's side, was Stephen Shewell, merchant of Philadelphia, who sent out his "argosies." His mother was a quaker, and he, himself, I believe, descended from a quaker stock. He had ships trading to England, Holland, and the West Indies, and used to put his sons and nephews in them as captains, probably to save charges; for, in everything but stocking his cellars with provision, he was penurious. For sausages and "botargoes" (first authors, perhaps, of the jaundice in our blood), Friar John would have commended him. As Chaucer says,

"It snewèd, in his house, of meat and drink."

On that side of the family we seem all sailors and rough subjects, with a mitigation (on the female part) of quakerism; as, on the father's side, we are creoles and claret-drinkers, very polite and clerical.

My grandmother's maiden name was Bickley. I believe her family came from Buckinghamshire. The coat of arms are three half moons; which I happen to recollect, because of a tradition we had, that an honourable augmentation was made to them of three wheat-sheaves, in reward of some gallant achievement performed in cutting off a convoy of provisions by Sir William Bickley, a partisan of the House of Orange, who was made a Banneret. My grand-

mother was an open-hearted, cheerful woman, of a good healthy blood, and as generous as her husband was otherwise. The family consisted of five daughters and two sons. One of the daughters died unmarried: the three surviving ones were lately wives and mothers in Philadelphia. They and their husbands, agreeably to the American law of equal division, were in the receipt of a pretty property in lands and houses; our due share of which, some inadvertence on our parts appears to have forfeited. I confess I have often wished, at the close of a day's work, that people were not so excessively delicate on legal points, and so afraid of hurting the feelings of others, by supposing it possible for them to want a little of their grandfather's money. But I believe I ought to blush while I say this; and I do. One of my uncles died in England, a mild, excellent creature, more fit for solitude than the sea. The other, my uncle Stephen, a fine handsome fellow of great good nature and gallantry, was never heard of, after leaving the port of Philadelphia for the West Indies. He had a practice of crowding too much sail, which is supposed to have been his destruction. They said he did it "to get back to his ladies." My uncle was the means of saving his namesake, my brother Stephen, from a singular destiny. Some Indians, who came into the city to traffic, had been

observed to notice my brother a good deal. It is supposed they saw in his tall little person, dark face, and long black hair, a resemblance to themselves. One day they enticed him from my grandfather's house in Front-street, and taking him to the Delaware, which was close by, were carrying him off across the river, when his uncle descried them and gave the alarm. His threats induced them to come back; otherwise, it is thought, they intended to carry him into their own quarters, and bring him up as an Indian; so that, instead of a rare character of another sort,—an attorney who would rather compound a quarrel for his clients than get rich by it,—we might have had for a brother the Great Buffalo, Bloody Bear, or some such grim personage. I will indulge myself with the liberty of observing in this place, that with great diversity of character among us, with strong points of dispute even among ourselves, and with the usual amount, though not perhaps exactly the like nature, of infirmities common to other people,—some of us, may be, with greater, — we have all been persons who inherited the power of making sacrifices for the sake of a principle.

My grandfather, though intimate with Dr. Franklin, was secretly on the British side of the question when the American war broke out. He professed

to be neutral, and to attend only to business; but his neutrality did not avail him. One of his most valuably laden ships was burnt in the Delaware by the Revolutionists, to prevent its getting into the hands of the British; and besides making free with his botargoes, they despatched every now and then a file of soldiers to rifle his house of everything else that could be serviceable: linen, blankets, &c. And this, unfortunately, was only a taste of what he was to suffer; for, emptying his mercantile stores from time to time, they paid him with their continental currency, paper-money; the depreciation of which was so great as to leave him, at the close of the war, bankrupt of everything but some houses, which his wife brought him; they amounted to a sufficiency for the family support: and thus, after all his cunning neutralities, and his preference of individual to public good, he owed all that he retained to a generous and unspeculating woman. His saving grace, however, was not on every possible occasion confined to his money. He gave a very strong instance (for him) of his partiality to the British cause, by secreting in his house a gentleman of the name of Slater, who commanded a small armed vessel on the Delaware, and who was not long since residing in London. Mr. Slater had been taken prisoner, and confined at some miles' distance from Philadelphia. He contrived to

make his escape, and astonished my grandfather's family by appearing before them at night, drenched in the rain, which descends in torrents in that climate. They secreted him for several months in a room at the top of the house.

My mother, at that time, was a brunette with fine eyes, a tall lady-like person, and hair blacker than is seen of English growth. It was supposed that Anglo-Americans already began to exhibit the influence of climate in their appearance. The late Mr. West told me, that if he had met myself or any of my brothers in the streets, he should have pronounced, without knowing us, that we were Americans. A likeness has been discovered between us and some of the Indians in his pictures. My mother had no accomplishments but the two best of all, a love of nature and of books. Dr. Franklin offered to teach her the guitar; but she was too bashful to become his pupil. She regretted this afterwards, partly no doubt for having missed so illustrious a master. Her first child, who died, was named after him. I know not whether the anecdote is new; but I have heard, that when Dr. Franklin invented the Harmonica, he concealed it from his wife till the instrument was fit to play; and then woke her with it one night, when she took it for the music of angels. Among the visitors at my grandfather's house, besides Franklin, was Thomas

Paine; whom I have heard my mother speak of, as having a countenance that inspired her with terror. I believe his aspect was not captivating; but most likely his political and religious opinions did it no good in the eyes of the fair loyalist.

My mother was diffident of her personal merit, but she had great energy of principle. When the troubles broke out, and my father took that violent part in favour of the king, a letter was received by her from a person high in authority, stating, that if her husband would desist from opposition to the general wishes of the colonists, he should remain in security; but that if he thought fit to do otherwise, he must suffer the consequences which inevitably awaited him. The letter concluded with advising her, as she valued her husband's and family's happiness, to use her influence with him to act accordingly. To this, "in the spirit of old Rome and Greece," as one of her sons has proudly and justly observed (I will add, of Old England, and, though contrary to our royalist opinions, of New America too), my mother replied, that she knew her husband's mind too well to suppose for a moment that he would so degrade himself; and that the writer of the letter entirely mistook her, if he thought her capable of endeavouring to persuade him to an action contrary to the convictions of his

heart, whatever the consequences threatened might be. Yet the heart of this excellent woman, strong as it was, was already beating with anxiety for what might occur; and on the day when my father was seized, she fell into a fit of the jaundice, so violent as to affect her ever afterwards, and subject a previously fine constitution to every ill that came across it.

It was nearly two years before my mother could set off with her children for England. She embarked in the *Earl of Effingham* frigate, Captain Dempster, who, from the moment she was drawn up the sides of the vessel with her little boys, conceived a pity and respect for her, and paid her the most cordial attention. In truth, he felt more pity for her than he chose to express; for the vessel was old and battered, and he thought the voyage not without danger. Nor was it. They did very well till they came off the Scilly Islands, when a storm arose which threatened to sink them. The ship was with difficulty kept above water. Here my mother again showed how courageous her heart could be, by the very strength of its tenderness. There was a lady in the vessel who had betrayed weaknesses of various sorts during the voyage; and who even went so far as to resent the superior opinion which the gallant captain could not help entertaining of her fellow-passenger. My mother, instead of giving way to

tears and lamentations, did all she could to keep up the spirits of her children. The lady in question did the reverse; and my mother, feeling the necessity of the case, and touched with pity for children in the same danger as her own, was at length moved to break through the delicacy she had observed, and expostulate strongly with her, to the increased admiration of the captain, who congratulated himself on having a female passenger so truly worthy of the name of woman. Many years afterwards, near the same spot, and during a similar danger, her son, the writer of this book, with a wife and seven children around him, had occasion to call her to mind; and the example was of service even to him, a man. It was thought a miracle that the *Earl of Effingham* was saved. It was driven into Swansea Bay, and borne along by the heaving might of the waves into a shallow, where no vessel of so large a size ever appeared before; nor could it ever have got there, but by so unwonted an overlifting.

Having been born nine years later than the youngest of my brothers, I have no recollection of my mother's earlier aspect. Her eyes were always fine, and her person lady-like; her hair also retained its colour for a long period; but her brown complexion had been exchanged for a jaundiced one, which she retained through life; and her cheeks

were sunken, and her mouth drawn down with sorrow at the corners. She retained the energy of her character on great occasions; but her spirit in ordinary was weakened, and she looked at the bustle and discord of the present state of society with a frightened aversion. My father's danger, and the war-whoops of the Indians which she heard in Philadelphia, had shaken her soul as well as frame. The sight of two men fighting in the streets would drive her in tears down another road; and I remember, when we lived near the park, she would take me a long circuit out of the way rather than hazard the spectacle of the soldiers. Little did she think of the timidity with which she was thus inoculating me, and what difficulty I should have, when I went to school, to sustain all those fine theories, and that unbending resistance to oppression, which she inculcated. However, perhaps it ultimately turned out for the best. One must feel more than usual for the sore places of humanity, even to fight properly in their behalf. Never shall I forget her face, as it used to appear to me coming up the cloisters, with that weary hang of the head on one side, and that melancholy smile!

One holiday, in a severe winter, as she was taking me home, she was petitioned for charity by a woman sick and ill-clothed. It was in Blackfriars' Road,

I think about midway. My mother, with the tears in her eyes, turned up a gateway, or some such place, and beckoning the woman to follow, took off her flannel petticoat and gave it her. It is supposed that a cold which ensued, fixed the rheumatism upon her for life. Actions like these have doubtless been often performed, and do not of necessity imply any great virtue in the performer; but they do if they are of a piece with the rest of the character. Saints have been made for charities no greater.

The reader will allow me to quote a passage out of a poem of mine, because it was suggested by a recollection I had upon me of this excellent woman. It is almost the only passage in that poem worth repeating; which I mention, in order that he may lay the quotation to its right account, and not suppose I am anxious to repeat my verses because I fancy they must be good. In everything but the word "happy," the picture is from life. The bird spoken of is the nightingale,—the

> "Bird of wakeful glow,
> Whose louder song is like the voice of life,
> Triumphant o'er death's image; but whose deep,
> Low, lovelier note is like a gentle wife,
> A poor, a pensive, yet a happy one,
> Stealing, when daylight's common tasks are done,
> An hour for mother's work; and singing low,
> While her tired husband and her children sleep."

I have spoken of my mother during my father's troubles in England. She stood by him through them all; and in everything did more honour to marriage, than marriage did good to either of them: for it brought little happiness to her, and too many children to both. Of his changes of opinion, as well as of fortune, she partook also. She became a Unitarian, a Universalist, perhaps a Republican; and in her new opinions, as in her old, was apt, I suspect, to be a little too peremptory, and to wonder at those who could be of the other side. It was her only fault. She would have mended it, had she lived till now. Though not a republican myself, I have been thought, in my time, to speak too severely of kings and princes. I think I did, and that society is no longer to be bettered in that manner, but in a much calmer and nobler way. But I was a witness, in my childhood, to a great deal of suffering; I heard of more all over the world; and kings and princes bore a great share in the causes to which they were traced. Some of those causes were not to be denied.

It is now understood, on all hands, that the continuation of the American war was owing to the personal stubbornness of the king. My mother, in her indignation at him, for being the cause of so much unnecessary bloodshed, thought that the unfortunate malady into which he fell was a judgment of Provi-

dence. The truth is, it was owing to mal-organization, and to the diseases of his father and mother. A healthy consort restored reason to the family; and the politics of Queen Victoria have been as remarkable for good sense, as those of her grandfather were too frequently otherwise.

My mother's intolerance, after all, was only in theory. When anything was to be done, charity in her always ran before faith. If she could have served and benefited the king himself personally, indignation would soon have given way to humanity. She had a high opinion of everything that was decorous and feminine on the part of a wife; yet when a poor violent woman, the wife of an amiable and eloquent preacher, went so far on one occasion as to bite his hand in a fit of jealous rage as he was going to ascend his pulpit (and he preached with it in great pain), she was the only female of her acquaintance that continued to visit her; alleging that she wanted society and comfort so much the more. She had the highest notions of chastity; yet when a servant came to her, who could get no place because she had had an illegitimate child, my mother took her into her family, upon the strength of her candour and her destitute condition, and was served with an affectionate gratitude.

My mother's favourite books were Dr. Young's

Night Thoughts (which was a pity), and Mrs. Rowe's *Devout Exercises of the Heart.* I remember also her expressing great admiration of the novels of Mrs. Inchbald, especially the *Simple Story.* She was very fond of poetry, and used to hoard my verses in her pocket-book, and encourage me to write, by showing them to the Wests and the Thorntons. Her friends loved and honoured her to the last: and, I believe, they retained their regard for the family.

My mother's last illness was long, and was tormented with rheumatism. I envy my brother Robert the recollection of the filial attentions he paid her; but they shall be as much known as I can make them, not because he is my brother (which is nothing), but because he was a good son, which is much; and every good son and mother will be my warrant. My other brothers, who were married, were away with their families; and I, who ought to have attended more, was as giddy as I was young, or rather a great deal more so. I attended, but not enough. How often have we occasion to wish that we could be older or younger than we are, according as we desire to have the benefit of gaiety or experience!—Her greatest pleasure during her decay was to lie on a sofa, looking at the setting sun. She used to liken it to the door of heaven; and fancy her lost children there, waiting for her. She died in the

fifty-third year of her age, in a little miniature house which stands in a row behind the church that has been since built in Somers Town; and she was buried, as she had always wished to be, in the church-yard of Hampstead.

CHAPTER II.

CHILDHOOD.

The Leigh family.—Preposterous charge against it.—Beautiful character in Fielding applied to Mr. Leigh by his son.—Author's birthplace, Southgate.—Dr. Trinder, clergyman and physician.—Question of sporting.—Character of Izaak Walton.—Cruelty of a cockfighter.—Calais and infant heresy.—Porpoises and dolphins.—A despotic brother.—Supernatural fears in childhood.—Anecdote of an oath.—Martial toys.—Infant church-militant.—Manners and customs of the time.—Music and poetry.—Memories of songs.—Authors in vogue.—Pitt and Fox.—Lords and Commons.

I HAVE spoken of the Duke of Chandos, to whose nephew, Mr. Leigh, my father became tutor. Mr. Leigh, who gave me his name, was son of the duke's sister, Lady Caroline, and died member of parliament for Addlestrope. He was one of the kindest and gentlest of men, addicted to those tastes for poetry and sequestered pleasure, which have been conspicuous in his son, Lord Leigh; for all which reasons it would seem, and contrary to the usurping qualities in such cases made and provided, he and his

family were subjected the other day to one of the most extraordinary charges that a defeated claim ever brought drunken witnesses to set up; no less than the murder and burial of a set of masons, who were employed in building a bridge, and whose destruction in the act of so doing was to bury both them and a monument which they knew of, for ever! To complete the romance of the tragedy, a lady, the wife of the usurper, presides over the catastrophe. She cries, "Let go," while the poor wretches are raising a stone at night-time, amidst a scene of torches and seclusion; and down goes the stone, aided by this tremendous father and son, and crushes the victims of her ambition! She meant, as Cowley says Goliah did of David,

"At once their murder and their monument."

If a charge of the most awful crimes could be dug up against the memories of such men as Thomson and Shenstone, or of Cowley, or Cowper, or the "Man of Ross," it could not have created more laughing astonishment in the minds of those who knew them, than such a charge against the family of the Leighs. Its present representative in the notes to his volume of poems, printed some years ago, quotes the "following beautiful passage" out of Fielding:—

"It was the middle of May, and the morning was remarkably serene, when Mr. Allworthy walked forth on the terrace, where the dawn opened every minute that lovely prospect we have before described, to his eye. And now having sent forth streams of light which ascended to the firmament before him, as harbingers preceding his pomp, in the full blaze of his majesty up rose the sun; than which one object alone in this lower creation could be more glorious, and that Mr. Allworthy himself presented; a human being replete with benevolence, meditating in what manner he might render himself most acceptable to his Creator by doing most good to his creatures."

"This," adds the quoter, "is the portrait of a fictitious personage; but I see in it a close resemblance to one whose memory I shall never cease to venerate."

The allusion is to his father, Mr. Leigh.

But I must not anticipate the verdict of a court of justice.* Indeed, I should have begged pardon of my noble friend for speaking of this preposterous accusation, did not the very excess of it force the words from my pen, and were I not sure that my

* The verdict has since been given. It almost seemed ridiculous, it was so unnecessary; except, indeed, as a caution to the like of those whom it punished.

own father would have expected them from me, had he been alive to hear it. His lordship must accept them as an effusion of grateful sympathy from one father and son to another.

Lord Leigh has written many a tender and thoughtful verse, in which, next to the domestic affections and the progress of human kind, he shows that he loves above all things the beauties of external nature, and the tranquil pleasures they suggest.

So much do I agree with him, that it is a pleasure to me to know that I was even born in so sweet a village as Southgate. I first saw the light there on the 19th of October 1784. It found me cradled, not only in the lap of the nature which I love, but in the midst of the truly English scenery which I love beyond all other. Middlesex in general, like my noble friend's county of Warwickshire, is a scene of trees and meadows, of "greenery" and nestling cottages; and Southgate is a prime specimen of Middlesex. It is a place lying out of the way of innovation, therefore it has the pure, sweet air of antiquity about it; and as I am fond of local researches in any quarter, it may be pardoned me if in this instance I would fain know even the meaning of its name. There is no Northgate, Eastgate, or Westgate in Middlesex: what, then, is Southgate?

No topographer tells us; but an old map of the country twenty-five miles round London, drawn up some years previous to my childhood, is now before me; and on looking at the boundaries of Enfield Chase, I see that the "Chase-gate," the name most likely of the principal entrance, is on the north side of it, by North-Hall and Potter's Bar; while Southgate, which has also the name of "South-street," is on the Chase's opposite border; so that it seems evident, that Southgate meant the southern entrance into the chase, and that the name became that of a village from the growth of a street. The street, in all probability, was the consequence of a fair held in a wood which ran on the western side of it, and which, in the map, is designated "Bush Fair." *Bush,* in old English, meant not only a hedge, but a wood; as *Bois* and *Bosco* do in French and Italian. Moses and the "burning bush" is Moses and the "burning wood;" which, by the way, presents a much grander idea than the modicum of hedge, commonly assigned to the celestial apparition. There is a good deal more wood in the map than is now to be found. I wander in imagination through the spots marked in the neighbourhood, with their pleasant names — Woodside, Wood-green, Palmer-green, Nightingale-hall, &c., and fancy my father and mother listening to the nightingales, and loving the new

little baby, who has now lived to see more years than they did.

Southgate lies in a cross-country road, running from Edmonton through Enfield Chase into Hertfordshire. It is in the parish of Edmonton; so that we may fancy the *Merry Devil* of that place still playing his pranks hereabouts, and helping innocent lovers to a wedding, as in the sweet little play attributed to Drayton. For as to any such devils going to a place less harmonious, it is not to be thought possible by good Christians. Furthermore, to show what classical ground is round about Southgate, and how it is associated with the best days of English genius, both old and new, Edmonton is the birthplace of Marlowe, the father of our drama, and of my friend Horne, his congenial celebrator. In Edmonton churchyard lies Charles Lamb; in Highgate churchyard, Coleridge; and in Hampstead have resided Shelley and Keats, to say nothing of Akenside before them, and of Steele and Arbuthnot before Akenside.

But the neighbourhood is dear to me on every account; for near Southgate is Colney Hatch, where my mother became acquainted with some of her dearest friends, whom I shall mention by-and-by. Near Colney Hatch is Finchley, where our family resided on quitting Southgate; and at no great

distance from Finchley is Mill Hill, where lived excellent Dr. Trinder, who presented in his person the rare combination of clergyman and physician. He boasted that he had cured a little child (to-wit, myself) of a dropsy in the head. The fact was contested, I believe, by the lay part of the profession; but it was believed in the family, and their love of the good doctor was boundless. He deserved it for his amiable qualities, as I shall presently show.

I may call myself, in every sense of the word, etymological not excepted, a son of mirth and melancholy; for my father's Christian name (as old students of onomancy would have heard with serious faces) was Isaac, which is Hebrew for "laughter," and my mother's was Mary, which comes from a word in the same language signifying "bitterness." And, indeed, as I do not remember to have ever seen my mother smile, except in sorrowful tenderness, so my father's shouts of laughter are now ringing in my ears. Not at any expense to her gravity, for he loved her, and thought her an angel on earth; but because his animal spirits were invincible. I inherit from my mother a tendency to jaundice, which at times has made me melancholy enough. I doubt, indeed, whether I have passed a day during half my life, without reflections, the

first germs of which are traceable to sufferings which this tendency once cost me. My prevailing temperament, nevertheless, is my father's; and it has not only enabled me to turn those reflections into sources of tranquillity and exaltation, but helped my love of my mother's memory to take a sort of pride in the infirmity which she bequeathed me. The energetic influence of this temperament must have been wonderful; for in childhood I had all the diseases (so to speak) which the infant "spitals know." The first of them was the real or supposed dropsy in the head, for which the reverend physician was called in.

Let the reader indulge me with fancying that I discharge a filial duty in speaking of this gentleman, and in saying something of his efforts in the cause of humanity in general. I had the pleasure of picking up, the other day, at a bookstall, "Practical Sermons, preached at Hendon, in Middlesex, by W. M. Trinder, LL.B., and M.D., Rivingtons, 1786;" so that, supposing LL.B. (bachelor of laws) to mean anything but a courtesy, the good doctor combined in his person not only the two, but the three professions. He was clergyman, physician, and lawyer, at once. How this singular triplicity came to take place, I cannot say. Probably his philanthropy induced him to study the law, as that

of Shelley induced my friend to walk the hospitals, for the purpose of doing good among the poor. The doctor may, indeed, have studied medicine for the like reason; for divinity appears to have been his profession paramount. I suspect that he was physician first, and clergyman afterwards. Perhaps he must have been so; for I am not aware that clergymen would be suffered to take medical degrees. It might be supposed that he was a dissenter; but he was emphatically otherwise, very orthodox and loyal. Among the subscribers' names to his sermons, besides that of my father, who was a Church-of-England clergyman, are those of several others, including the Hendon vicar; and in the list is Garrick, who was lord of the manor. The sermons are not profound, but they are replete with feeling and good sense; and they mix up the physician with the divine to so much purpose as to make a reader wish that the offices could be more frequently combined. One of them, "On Education," threatens the Divine displeasure against mothers who do not suckle their children; and it enters into medical reasons why the failure to do so is injurious to both parties. Another, "On Cruelty," does not hesitate to condemn the "gentle craft" of anglers; and it is particularly severe, and probably did great good, on the subject of cock-throwing—a brutality now

extinguished; for cocks scream, but fish only gasp and are stifled; so that the latter must probably wait another century before the Trinders can procure them justice.

Many brave and good men have been anglers, as well as many men of a different description; but their goodness would have been complete, and their bravery of a more generous sort, had they possessed self-denial enough to look the argument in the face, and abstained from procuring themselves pleasure at the expense of a needless infliction. The charge is not answered by the favourite retorts about effeminacy, God's providence, neighbours' faults, and doing "no worse." They are simple beggings of the question. I am not aware that anglers, or sportsmen in general, are braver than the ordinary run of mankind. Sure I am that a great fuss is made if they hurt their fingers; much more if they lie gasping, like fish, on the ground. I am equally sure that many a man who would not hurt a fly is as brave as they are; and as to the reference to God's providence, it is an edge-tool that might have been turned against themselves by anybody who chose to pitch them into the river, or knock out their brains. They may lament, if they please, that they should be forced to think of pain and evil at all; but the lamentation would not be very mag-

nanimous under any circumstances; and it is idle, considering that the manifest ordination and progress of things demand that such thoughts be encountered. The question still returns,—Why do they seek amusement in sufferings which are unnecessary and avoidable? and till they honestly and thoroughly answer this question, they must be content to be looked upon as disingenuous reasoners, who are determined to retain a selfish pleasure.

As to old Izaak Walton, who is put forward as a substitute for argument on this question, and whose sole merits consisted in his having a taste for nature and his being a respectable citizen, the trumping him up into an authority and a kind of saint is a burlesque. He was a writer of conventionalities; who having comfortably feathered his nest, as he thought, both in this world and in the world to come, concluded he had nothing more to do than to amuse himself by putting worms on a hook and fish into his stomach, and so go to heaven, chuckling and singing psalms. There would be something in such a man and in his book offensive to a real piety, if that piety did not regard whatever has happened in the world, great and small, with an eye that makes the best of what is perplexing, and trusts to eventual good out of the worst. Walton was not the hearty and thorough advocate of nature he is

supposed to have been. There would have been something to say for him on that score, had he looked upon the sum of evil as a thing not to be diminished. But he shared the opinions of the most commonpace believers in sin and trouble, and only congratulated himself on being exempt from their consequences. The overweening old man found himself comfortably off somehow; and it is good that he did. It is a comfort to all of us, wise or foolish. But to reverence him is a jest. You might as well make a god of an otter. Mr. Wordsworth, because of the servitor manners of Walton and his biographies of divines (all *anglers*), wrote an idle line about his "meekness" and his "heavenly memory." When this is quoted by the gentle brethren, it will be as well if they add to it another passage from the same poet, which returns to the only point at issue, and upsets the old gentleman altogether. Mr. Wordsworth's admonition to us is,—

> "Never to link our pastime, or our pride,
> With suffering to the meanest thing that lives."

It was formerly thought effeminate not to hunt Jews; then not to roast heretics; then not to bait bears and bulls; then not to fight cocks, and to throw sticks at them. All these evidences of manhood became gradually looked upon as no such evidences

at all, but things fit only for manhood to renounce; yet the battles of Waterloo and of Sobraon have been won, and Englishmen are not a jot the less brave all over the world. Probably they are braver, that is to say, more deliberately brave, more serenely valiant; also more merciful to the helpless, and that is the crown of valour.

It was during my infancy, if I am not mistaken, that there lived at Hampstead (a very unfit place for such a resident), a man whose name I suppress lest there should be possessors of it surviving, and who was a famous cock-fighter. He was rich and idle, and therefore had no bounds to set to the unhappy passions that raged within him. It is related of this man, that, having lost a bet on a favourite bird, he tied the noble animal to a spit in his kitchen before the fire, and notwithstanding the screams of the sufferer and the indignant cries of the beholders, whose interference he wildly resisted with the poker, actually persisted in keeping it there burning, till he fell down in his fury and died.

Let us hope he was mad. What, indeed, is more probable? It is always a great good, when the crimes of a fellow-creature can be traced to madness; to some fault of the temperament or organization; some "jangle of the sweet bells;" some overbalance in the desired equipoise of the faculties, originating, per-

haps, in accident or misfortune. It does not subject us the more to their results. On the contrary, it sets us on our guard against them. And, meantime, it diminishes one of the saddest, most injurious, and most preposterous notions of human ignorance,—the belief in the wickedness of our kind.

But I have said enough of these barbarous customs, and must take care that my reflections do not carry me too far from my reminiscences.

I forget whether it was Dr. Trinder,—for some purpose of care and caution,—but somebody told my mother (and she believed it), that if I survived to the age of fifteen I might turn out to possess a more than average amount of intellect; but that otherwise I stood a chance of dying an idiot. The reader may imagine the anxiety which this information would give to a tender mother. Not a syllable of course did she breathe to me on the subject till the danger was long past, and doubly did I then become sensible of all the marks of affection which I called to mind; of the unusual things which she had done for me; of the neglect, alas! which they had too often experienced from me, though not to her knowledge; and of the mixture of tenderness and anxiety which I had always noted in her face. I was the youngest and least robust of her sons, and during early childhood I used hardly to recover

from one illness before I was seized with another. The doctor said I must have gone through an extraordinary amount of suffering. I have sometimes been led to consider this as the first layer of that accumulated patience with which, in after life, I had occasion to fortify myself; and the supposition has given rise to many consolatory reflections on the subject of endurance in general.

To assist my recovery from one of these illnesses, I was taken to the coast of France, where, as usual, I fell into another; and one of my earliest recollections is of a good-natured French woman, the mistress of the lodging-house at Calais, who cried over the "poore littel boy," because I was a heretic. She thought I should go to the devil. Poor soul! What torments must the good-hearted woman have undergone; and what pleasant pastime it is for certain of her loud and learned inferiors to preach such doctrines, careless of the injuries they inflict, or even hoping to inflict them for the sake of some fine deity-degrading lesson, of which their sordid imaginations and splenetic itch of dictation assume the necessity. It was lucky for me that our hostess was a gentle, not a violent bigot, and susceptible at her heart of those better notions of God which are instinctive in the best natures. She might otherwise have treated me, as a late traveller says, infants

have been treated by Catholic nurses, and murdered in order to save me.*

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* *Letters from the Bye-ways of Italy:* By Mrs. Henry Stisted. As the passage is very curious, and the book, though otherwise interesting, not likely to be found on the highways of the reading public, it shall be here repeated.

"Amongst the followers of the house of Stuart," says the authoress, "there was a faithful follower, of the name of Hadfield. The fallen line, having no better return to make him for years of service, established him in an hotel on the Arno, at Florence, now the *Quatre-Nations:* to which the partisans of the royal exiles, in consequence, resorted. Mr. Hadfield had recently married: the birth of a son soon completed his domestic happiness. There could not be a finer, healthier boy. After a few months, the child fell asleep one day and awoke no more—his death was in no way to be accounted for! The grief and disappointment of his parents only gave way to the birth of another infant the following year; it was also a boy, blooming, and full of life. He also slept the sleep of death, to awake no more! A third was born, and the same mysterious fate awaited him: the horror of the heart-stricken parents can only be imagined—

"The shaft flew thrice, and thrice their peace was slain."

"The following year, the olive branch was again held forth in mercy. A fourth child was vouchsafed—it was a girl. The parents watched and prayed, but trembled! Only a few weeks had passed over, when the nurse, to whom the infant had been intrusted, ran to them one day, her countenance full of horror, her lips livid; she could not articulate, but held out

In returning from the coast of France, we stopped at Deal, and I found myself, one evening, standing with an elder brother on the beach, looking at a shoal of porpoises, creatures of which he had given me some tremendous, mysterious notion. I remember, as if it was yesterday, feeling the shades of evening, and the solemnity of the spectacle, with an awful intensity. There they were, tumbling along in the foam, what exactly I knew not, but

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the babe to its mother. After some restoratives had been given, the poor creature recovered sufficiently to tell, that, having left the nursery for a moment, while the child slept, and without her shoes for fear of awaking her, she was amazed, on her return with noiseless step, to find old Brigida, the laundress of the hotel, leaning over the cradle, with a vial in her hand. The crone, unconscious of her presence, was talking to herself. The nurse could distinctly hear her words to this effect: 'I must snatch another heretic from hell! Drink, my child, and join your brothers: they are angels in paradise. The Blessed Virgin waits for you.' The wretch was in the act of applying the vial to the infant's lips, when the nurse darted forward, snatched up the child, and fled! Old Brigida fled, too—but it was to a convent, a sanctuary! where her guilt was deemed meritorious, and her redemption secure. She died soon after, in the odour of sanctity.

"The child was saved," concludes Mrs. Stisted; "but the affrighted parents, obliged to live abroad, baptized her according to the rites of the Roman church. Their daughter proved of precocious mind. Her talents and beauty rendered her well

fearful creatures of some sort. My brother spoke to me of them in an under tone of voice, and I held my breath as I looked. The very word "porpoise," had an awful, mouth-filling sound.

Perhaps they were dolphins. The dolphin is found on the English coast, and, indeed, the porpoise is a species of dolphin. Certainly, no Greek could have held him in more respect than I did at that moment. I did not know that his name, porpoise, meant hog-fish; and as little was I aware that he

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known in after years in England: she was the celebrated Maria Cosway."—p. 479.

This story is related on the authority of a sister of Mrs. Cosway, with whom Mrs. Stisted was intimate; and she adds, that it is still remembered in Italy, but alluded to with horror.

The fair author, however, who is herself zealous for the making of proselytes and the salvation of souls, does not see that she is playing with a tremendous two-edged weapon in calling old Brigida a wretch, and that the first germ of the horror lay in those opinions, common to both, which associate the Divine Being himself with horrors infinitely more shocking.

It is not Mrs. Stisted's creed that will have saved the world from the continuance of such melancholy absurdities, but those better opinions of God and man which the progress of knowledge and loving-kindness is gradually introducing into all creeds.

was no fish at all, but an animal of the "cetaceous" order, boned and warm-blooded like myself, and forced to breathe air. This might have added to my notions of him, had my brother possessed the information, and they would have been aggravated, had I learned that he went by the name of Goblin (Nisack) among the Zetlanders. "Certainly," says the gentleman who informs us of this circumstance, "a porpoise in the act of tumbling in the sea is no bad personification of a goblin."* But that was pretty much my feeling about him, as it was. I looked on him as something between fish and ogre; and I never thought of the sea long afterwards, without picturing him and his fellows in my imagination going monstrously along.

In subsequent years, poetry and mythology taught me to love the porpoise. Who does not learn to love everything in the all-embracing sweetness of poetry? The porpoise was the cousin of Arion's dolphin, if not the musician's actual bearer. I therefore discovered that he was a very pleasant, gambolling fellow, full of sociality, and classical withal; a reputation old as the seas, yet fresh as the gale of yesterday. And he, or his kind, were the horses of the sea-nymphs.

* Bell's *British Quadrupeds and Cetacea*, p. 475.

A team of dolphins, rangèd in array,
Drew the smooth chariot of sad Cymoënt:
They were all taught by Triton to obey
To the long reins at her commandèment:
As swift as swallows on the waves they went,
That their broad flaggy fins no foam did rear,
Nor bubbling roundel they behind them sent:
The rest, of other fishes, drawen were,
Which with their finny oars the swelling sea did shear.

Soon as they been arriv'd upon the brim
Of the Rich Strand, their chariots they forlore,

(These ladies of the sea were on a visit)

And let their teamèd fishes softly swim
Along the margent of the foamy shore;
Lest they their fins should bruise, and surbeat sore
Their tender feet upon the stony ground.

Faerie Queene, Book III, Canto iv.

Who would not think that Spenser had kept a dolphin-chariot and pair? Cymoënt is a sea-nymph, coming, with her sisters of the ocean, to visit her son Marinell, Lord of the Precious Shore.

It is thus that dreams of goblins vanish in the light of knowledge and beauty.

This brother of mine, who is now no more, and who might have been a Marinell himself, for his notions of wealth and grandeur (to say nothing of his marrying, in succession, two ladies with dowries, from islands, whom ancient imagination could easily

have exalted into sea-nymphs), was then a fine tall lad, of intrepid spirit, a little too much given to playing tricks on those who had less. My other brothers were all as bold as himself; but he had discovered that the latest born was more "nervous," and that a new field lay open for his amusement in the little one's imagination. He was a dozen years older than I was, and as he had a good deal of the despot in a nature otherwise generous, and had succeeded even in lording it over such of his brothers as chose to let him (for disputes frightened my mother), his ascendancy threatened to enslave their junior altogether. I had acquired, however, an art of evading his tyranny, by the help of my very childhood, which enabled me to keep out of his way; and, in addition to this resource, I had a certain resentment of my own weakness, which came in aid of the family spirit.

To give an instance of the lengths to which my brother S. carried his claims of ascendancy, he used to astonish the boys, at a day-school to which he went in Finchley, by appearing among them with clean shoes, when the bad state of the lanes rendered the phenomenon unaccountable. Reserve on one side, and shame on another, kept the mystery a secret for some time. At length it turned out, that he was in the habit, on muddy days, of

making one of his brothers carry him to school on his shoulders.

This brother (Robert), who is still living to laugh at the recollection, and who, as I have intimated, was quite as brave as himself, was at a disadvantage on such occasions, from his very bravery; since he knew what a horror my mother would have felt, had there been any collision between them; so he used to content himself with an oratorical protest, and acquiesce. Being a brave, or at all events irritable little fellow enough myself, till illness, imagination, and an ultra tender and anxious rearing, conspired to render me fearful and patient, I had no such consequences to think of. When S. took me bodily in hand, I was only exasperated. I remember the furious struggles I used to make, and my endeavours to get at his shins, when he would hold me at arm's length, "aggravating" me (as the phrase is) by taunting speeches, and laughing like a goblin.

But on the "night-side of human nature," as Mrs. Crowe calls it, he "had me." I might confront him and endeavour to kick his shins by daylight, but with respect to ghosts, as the sailor said, I did not "understand their tackle." I had unfortunately let him see that I did not like to be in the dark, and that I had a horror of dreadful faces; even in books. I had found something particularly ghastly in the figure of

an old man crawling on the ground, in some frontispiece—I think to a book called the *Looking-Glass;* and there was a fabulous wild-beast, a portrait of which, in some picture-book, unspeakably shocked me. It was called the Mantichora. It had the head of a man, grinning with rows of teeth, and the body of a wild-beast, brandishing a tail armed with stings. It was sometimes called by the ancients *Mar*tichora. But I did not know that. I took the word to be a horrible compound of *man* and *tiger*. The beast figures in Pliny and the old travellers. Apollonius had heard of him. He takes a fearful joy in describing him, even from report:—

"Apollonius asked 'if they had among them the Martichora.' 'What!' said Iarchas, 'have you heard of that animal; for if you have, you have probably heard something extraordinary of its figure.' 'Great and wonderful things have I heard of it,' replied Apollonius. 'It is of the number of quadrupeds, has a head like a man's, is as large as a lion, with a tail from which bristles grow, of the length of a cubit, all as sharp as prickles, which it shoots forth like so many arrows against its pursuers."*

That sentence, beginning "Great and wonderful things," proves to me, that Apollonius must once have been a little boy, looking at picture-books. The

* *Berwick's Translation*, p. 176.

possibility of such "creatures" being "pursued" never occurred to me. Alexander, I thought, might have been encountered while crossing the Granicus, and elephants might be driven into the sea; but how could any one face a beast with a man's head? One look of its horrid countenance (which it always carried fronting you, as it went by—I never imagined it seen in profile) would have been enough, I concluded, to scare an army. Even full-grown dictionary makers had been frightened out of their propriety at the thought of him. "Mantichora," says old Morell—"*bestia horrenda*"—(a brute fit to give one the horrors).

In vain my brother played me repeated tricks with this frightful anomaly. I was always ready to be frightened again. At one time he would grin like the Mantichora; then he would roar like him; then call about him in the dark. I remember his asking me to come up to him one night at the top of the house. I ascended, and found the door shut. Suddenly a voice came through the key-hole, saying, in its hollowest tones, "The Mantichora 's coming." Down I rushed to the parlour, fancying the terror at my heels.

I dwell the more on this seemingly petty circumstance, because such things are no petty ones to a sensitive child. My brother had no idea of the

mischief they did me. Perhaps the mention of them will save mischief to others. They helped to morbidize all that was weak in my temperament, and cost me many a bitter night.

Another time I was reading to him, while he was recovering in bed from an accident. He was reckless in his play; had once broken his leg on Hampstead Heath; and was now getting well from a broken collar bone. He gave me a volume, either of "Elegant Extracts," or "Aikin's Miscellanies," to read (I think the former), and selected the story of *Sir Bertrand*. He did not betray by his face what was coming. I was enchanted with the commencement about the "dreary moors" and the "curfew;" and I was reading on with breathless interest, when, at one of the most striking passages,—probably some analogous one about a noise,—he contrived, with some instrument or other, to give a tremendous knock on the wall. Up I jumped, aghast; and the invalid lay rolling with laughter.

It was lucky for me that I inherited a check to this sensibility, in the animal spirits of my father: and unceasing, above all, has been my gratitude, both to father and mother, for the cheerful opinions which they took care to give me in religion. What the reverse might have done for me, I shudder to think. I hope good sense would have predominated,

and moral courage enough been left me to go to a physician and cultivate my bodily strength; but among the strange compliments which superstition pays to the Creator, is a scorn and contempt for the fleshly investiture which he has bestowed on us, at least among Christians; for the Pagans were far more pious in this respect; and Mahomet agreed with them in doing justice to the beauty and dignity of the human frame. It is quite edifying, in the Arabian Nights, to read the thanks that are so often and so rapturously given to the Supreme Being for his bestowal of such charms on his creatures. Nor was a greater than Mahomet of a nature to undervalue the earthly temples of gentle and loving spirits. Ascetic mistakes have ever originated in want of heartiness or of heart; in consciousness of defect, or vulgarity of nature, or in spiritual pride. A well-balanced body and soul never, we may be sure, gave way to it. What an extraordinary flattery of the Deity to say, "Lord! I thank thee for this jewel of a soul which I possess; but what a miserable casket thou hast given me to put it in!"

So healthily had I the good fortune to be brought up in point of religion, that (to anticipate a remark which might have come in at a less effective place), I remember kneeling one day at the school-church during the Litany, when the thought fell upon me—

"Suppose eternal punishment should be true." An unusual sense of darkness and anxiety crossed me —but only for a moment. The next instant the extreme absurdity and impiety of the notion restored me to my ordinary feelings; and from that moment to this,—respect the mystery of the past as I do, and attribute to it what final good out of fugitive evil I may,—I have never for one instant doubted the transitoriness of the doctrine, and the unexclusive goodness of futurity. All those question-begging argumentations of the churches and schools, which are employed to reconcile the inflictions of the nursery to the gift of reason, and which would do quite as well for the absurdities of any one creed as another, (indeed they would be found to have done so, were we as deeply read in the religions of East as of West,) come to nothing before the very modesty to which they appeal, provided it is a modesty healthy and loving. The more even of fugitive evil which it sees (and no ascertained evil suffered by any individual creature is otherwise), nay, the more which is disclosed to it in the very depths and concealments of nature, only the more convinces it that the great mystery of all things will allow of no lasting evil, visible or invisible; and therefore it concludes that the evil which does exist is for some good purpose, and for the final blessing of all sen-

tient beings, of whom it takes a care so remarkable.

I know not whether it was fortunate or unfortunate for me, humanly speaking, that my mother did not see as far into healthiness of training in other respects as in this. Some of the bad consequences to myself were indeed obvious, as the reader has seen; but it may have enabled me to save worse to others. If I could find any fault with her memory (speaking after an ordinary fashion), it would be that I was too delicately bred, except as to what is called good living. My parents were too poor for luxury. But she set me an example of such excessive care and anxiety for those about us, that I remember I could not see her bite off the ends of her thread while at work without being in pain till I was sure she would not swallow them. She used to be so agitated at the sight of discord and quarrelling, particularly when it came to blows, and between the rudest or gayest combatants in the street, that although it did not deprive her of courage and activity enough to interfere (which she would do if there was the slightest chance of effect, and which produced in myself a corresponding discrimination between sensibility and endeavour), it gave me an ultra-sympathy with the least show of pain and suffering; and she had produced in me such a

horror, or rather such an intense idea of even violent words, and of the commonest trivial oath, that being led one day, perhaps by the very excess of it, to snatch a "fearful joy" in its utterance, it gave me so much remorse that for some time afterwards I could not receive a bit of praise, or a pat of encouragement on the head, without thinking to myself, "Ah, they little suspect that I am the boy who said, 'd—n it.'"

Dear mother! No one could surpass her in generosity; none be more willing to share, or to take the greatest portion of blame to themselves, of any evil consequences of mistake to a son; but if I have not swallowed very many camels in the course of my life, it has not been owing perhaps to this too great a straining at gnats. How happy shall I be (if I may) to laugh and compare notes with her on the subject in any humble corner of heaven; to recall to her the filial tenderness with which she was accustomed to speak of the mistakes of one of her own parents, and to think that her grandchildren will be as kind to the memory of their father.

I may here mention, as a ludicrous counterpart to this story, and a sample of the fantastical nature of scandal, that somebody having volunteered a defence of my character on some occasion to a distinguished living poet, as though the character had been ques-

tioned by him,—the latter said he had never heard anything against it, except that I was "given to swearing."

I certainly think little of the habit of swearing, however idle, if it be carried no further than is done by many gallant and very good men, wise and great ones not excepted. I wish I had no worse faults to answer for. But the fact is, that however I may laugh at the puerile conscience of the anecdote just mentioned, an oath has not escaped my lips from that day to this.

I hope no "good fellow" will think ill of me for it. If he did, I should certainly be tempted to begin swearing immediately, purely to *vindicate* my character. But there was no swearing in our family; there was none in our school (Christ-Hospital); and I seldom ever fell in the way of it anywhere except in books; so that the practice was not put into my head. I look upon Tom Jones, who swore, as an angel of light compared with Blifil, who, I am afraid, swore no more than myself. Steele, I suspect, occasionally rapped out an oath; which is not to be supposed of Addison. And this, again, might tempt me into a grudge against my nonjuring turn of colloquy; for I must own that I prefer open-hearted Steele with all his faults, to Addison with all his essays. But habit is habit, negative as well as

positive. Let him that is without one, cast the first sarcasm.

After all, swearing was once seriously objected to me, and I had given cause for it. I must own, that I even begged hard to be allowed a few oaths. It was for an article in a magazine, where I had to describe a fictitious person, whose character I thought required it; and I pleaded truth to nature, and the practice of the good old novelists; but in vain. The editor was not to be entreated. He was Mr. Theodore Hook.

Perhaps this was what gave rise to the poet's impression.

But to return to my reminiscences. It may appear surprising to some, that a child brought up in such scruples of conscience, and particularly in such objections to pugnacity, should have ever found himself in possession of such toys as a drum and a sword. A distinguished economist, who was pleased the other day to call me the "spoiled child of the public" (a title which I should be proud to possess), expressed his astonishment, that a person so "gentle" should have been a fighter in the thick of politics. But the "gentleness" was the reason. I mean, that under certain circumstances of training, the very love of peace and comfort, in begetting a desire to see those benefits partaken by

others, begets a corresponding indignation at seeing them withheld.

I am aware of the perils of reaction to which this feeling tends; of the indulgence in bad passions which it may disguise; of the desirableness of quietly advocating whatever is quietly to be secured; of the perplexity occasioned to all these considerations by the example which appears to be set by nature herself in her employment of storm and tempest; and of the answer to be given to that perplexity by the modesty of human ignorance and its want of certainty of foresight. Nevertheless, till this question be settled (and the sooner the justice of the world can settle it the better), it renders the best natures liable to inconsistencies between theory and practice, and forces them into self-reconcilements of conscience, neither quite so easy in the result, nor so deducible from perfect reason as they would suppose. My mother, whose fortunes had been blighted, and feelings agonized, by the revolution in America, and who had conceived such a horror of war, that when we resided once near the Park, she would take a long circuit (as I have before mentioned), rather than go through it, in order to avoid seeing the soldiers, permitted me, nevertheless, to have the drum and the sword. Why? Because, if the sad necessity were to come, it would be her

son's duty to war against war itself—to fight against those who oppressed the anti-fighters.

My father, entertaining these latter opinions without any misgiving (enforced, too, as they were by his classical education), and both my parents being great lovers of sermons, which he was in the habit of reading to us of an evening, I found myself at one time cultivating a perplexed ultra-conscientiousness with my mother; at another, laughing and being jovial with my father; and at a third, hearing from both of them stories of the Greek and Roman heroes, some of whom she admired as much as he did. The consequence was, that I one day presented to the astonished eyes of the maid-servant a combination that would have startled Dr. Trinder, and delighted the eyes of an old Puritan. To clap a sword by my side, and get the servant to pin up my hat into the likeness of the hat military, were symptoms of an ambition which she understood and applauded; but when I proceeded to append to this martial attire one of my father's bands, and, combining the military with the ecclesiastical authority, got upon a chair to preach to an imaginary audience over the back of it, she seemed to think the image realized of "heaven and earth coming together." However, she ended with enjoying, and even abetting, this new avatar of the church militant. Had I been a Mahomet, she

would have been my first proselyte, and I should have called her the Maid-servant of the Faithful. She was a good, simple-hearted creature, who from not having been fortunate with the first orator in whom she believed, had stood a chance of ruin for life, till received into the only family that would admit her; and she lived and died in its service.

The desire thus childishly exhibited, of impressing some religious doctrine, never afterwards quitted me; though, in consequence of the temperament which I inherited from one parent, and the opinions which I derived from both, it took a direction singularly cheerful. For a man is but his parents, or some other of his ancestors, drawn out. My father, though a clergyman of the Established Church, had settled, as well as my mother, into a Christian of the Universalist persuasion, which believes in the final restoration of all things. It was hence that I learned the impiety (as I have expressed it) of the doctrine of eternal punishment. In the present day, a sense of that impiety, in some way or other, whether of doubt or sophistication, is the secret feeling of nine-tenths of all churches: and every church will discover, before long, that it must rid itself of the doctrine, if it would not cease to exist. Love is the only creed destined to survive all others. They who think that no church can

exist without a strong spice of terror, should watch the growth of education, and see which system of it is the most beloved. They should see also which system in the very nursery is growing the most ridiculous. The threat of the "black man and the coal-hole" has vanished from all decent infant training. What, answer, is the father, who would uphold the worst form of it, to give to the child whom he has spared the best?

How pleasant it is, in reviewing one's life, to look back on the circumstances that originated or encouraged any kindly tendency. I behold, at this moment, with lively distinctness, the handsome face of Miss C., who was the first person I remember seeing at a pianoforte; and I have something of a like impression of that of Miss M., mother, if I mistake not, or, at all events, near relation, of my distinguished friend Sheridan Knowles. My parents and his were acquainted. My mother, though fond of music, and a gentle singer in her way, had missed the advantage of a musical education, partly from her coming of a half-quaker stock, partly (as I have said before) from her having been too diffident to avail herself of the kindness of Dr. Franklin, who offered to teach her the guitar.

The reigning English composer at that time was "Mr. Hook," as he was styled at the head of his

songs. He was the father of my punctilious editor of the magazine; and had a real, though small vein of genius, which was none the better for its being called upon to flow profusely for Ranelagh and Vauxhall. He was composer of the *Lass of Richmond Hill* (an allusion to a penchant of George III.), and of another popular song more lately remembered, *'Twas within a mile of Edinborough town*. The songs of that day abounded in Strephons and Delias, and the music partook of the gentle inspiration. The association of early ideas with that kind of commonplace, has given me more than a toleration for it. I find something even touching in the endeavours of an innocent set of ladies and gentlemen, my fathers and mothers, to identify themselves with shepherds and shepherdesses, even in the most impossible hats and crooks. I think of the many heartfelt smiles that must have welcomed love-letters and verses containing that sophisticate imagery, and of the no less genuine tears that were shed over the documents when faded; and criticism is swallowed up in those human drops. This is one of the reasons why I can read even the most faded part of the works of Shenstone, and why I can dip again and again into such correspondence as that of the Countesses of Hertford and Pomfret, and of my Lady Luxborough, who raises monuments in her

garden to the united merits of Mr. Somervile and the god Pan. The feeling was true, though the expression was sophisticate and a fashion; and they who cannot see the feeling for the mode, do the very thing which they think they scorn; that is, sacrifice the greater consideration to the less.

But Hook was not the only, far less the most fashionable composer. There was (if not all personally, yet popularly contemporaneous) Mr. Lampe, and Mr. Oswald, and Dr. Boyce, and Linley, and Jackson, and Shield, and Storace, with Paesiello, Sacchini, and others at the King's Theatre, whose delightful airs wandered into the streets out of the English operas that borrowed them, and became confounded with English property. I have often, in the course of my life, heard *Whither, my love?* and *For tenderness formed*, boasted of, as specimens of English melody. For many years I took them for such myself, in common with the rest of our family, with whom they were great favourites. The first, which Stephen Storace adapted to some words in the "Haunted Tower," is the air of *La Rachelina* in Paesiello's opera, "La Molinara." The second, which was put by General Burgoyne to a song in his comedy of the "Heiress," is *Io sono Lindoro*, in the same enchanting composer's "Barbiere di Saviglia." The once popular English songs and duets, &c.,

How imperfect is expression; For me, my fair a wreath has wove; Henry cull'd the flow'ret's bloom; O, thou wert born to please me; Here's a health to all good lasses; Youth's the season made for joys; Gently touch the warbling lyre; No, 'twas neither shape nor feature; Pray, Goody, please to moderate; Hope told a flattering tale, and a hundred others, were all foreign compositions, chiefly Italian. Every burlesque or *buffo* song, of any pretension, was pretty sure to be Italian.

When Edwin, Fawcett, and others, were rattling away in the happy comic songs of O'Keeffe, with his triple rhymes and illustrative jargon, the audience little suspected that they were listening to some of the finest animal spirits of the south,—to Piccini, Paesiello, and Cimarosa. Even the wild Irishman thought himself bound to go to Naples, before he could get a proper dance for his gaiety. The only genuine English compositions worth anything at that time, were almost confined to Shield, Dibdin, and Storace, the last of whom, the author of *Lullaby*, who was an Italian born in England, formed the golden link between the music of the two countries, the only one, perhaps, in which English accentuation and Italian flow were ever truly amalgamated; though I must own that I am heretic enough (if present fashion is orthodoxy) to believe, that Arne was a real

musical genius, of a very pure, albeit not of the very first water. He has set, indeed, two songs of Shakspeare's (the *Cuckoo's song*, and *Where the bee sucks*) in a spirit of perfect analogy to the words, as well as of the liveliest musical invention; and his air of *Water parted*, in "Artaxerxes," winds about the feelings with an earnest and graceful tenderness of regret, worthy in the highest degree of the affecting beauty of the sentiment.

All the favourite poetry of the day, however, was of one cast. I have now before me a "Select Collection of English Songs," by Ritson, published in the year 1783, in three volumes octavo, the last of which contains the musical airs. The style is of the following description:—

> Almeria's face, her shape, her air,
> *With charms resistless wound the heart*, &c. p. 2.

(I should not wonder if dear Almeria T., whose tender affection for my mother will appear in another chapter, was christened out of this song.)

> Say, Myra, why is gentle love, &c.
> *Which racks the amorous breast*,

by Lord Lyttelton, the most admired poet, perhaps, of the age.

> *When Delia on the plain appears;*

also by his lordship.

In vain, *Philander*, at my feet.

Ah, *Damon, dear shepherd*, adieu.

Come, thou rosy dimpled boy,
Source of every heartfelt joy,
Leave the blissful bowers a while,
Paphos and the Cyprian isle.

This was a favourite song in our house. So was *Come, now, all ye social powers*, and

Come let us dance and sing,
While all Barbados bells shall ring;

probably on account of its mention of my father's native place. The latter song is not in Ritson. It was the finale in Colman's "Inkle and Yarico," a play founded on a Barbadian story, which our family must have gone with delight to see. Another favourite, which used to make my mother shed tears, on account of my sister Eliza, who died early, was Jackson of Exeter's song—

Encompass'd in an angel's frame.

It is, indeed, a touching specimen of that master. The *Hardy Tar*, also, and *The topsails shiver in the wind*, used to charm yet sadden her, on account of my eldest brother then living, who was at sea. The latter, written by the good-natured and gallant Captain Thompson, was set to music, I think, by

Arne's son, Michael, who had a fine musical sea-vein, simple and strong. He was the composer of *Fresh and strong the breeze is blowing.*

The other day I found two songs of that period on a music-stall, one by Mr. Hook, entitled *Alone by the light of the moon;* the other, a song with a French burden, called *Dans votre lit;* an innocent production, notwithstanding its title. They were the only songs I recollect singing when a child, and I looked on them with the accumulated tenderness of sixty-three years of age. I do not remember to have set eyes on them in the interval. What a difference between the little smooth-faced boy at his mother's knee, encouraged to lift up his voice to the pianoforte, and the battered grey-headed senior, looking again, for the first time, on what he had sung at the distance of more than half a century. Life often seems a dream; but there are occasions when the sudden re-appearance of early objects, by the intensity of their presence, not only renders the interval less present to the consciousness than a very dream, but makes the portion of life which preceded it seem to have been the most real of all things, and our only undreaming time.

Alone, by the light of the moon, and *Dans votre lit!* how had they not been thumbed and thrown aside by all the pianoforte young ladies—our mothers and

grandmothers—fifty years ago, never to be brought forth again, except by an explorer of old stalls, and to meet, perhaps, with no sympathy but in his single imagination! Yet there I stood; and Wardour-street, every street, all London, as it now exists, became to me as if it had never been. The universe itself was nothing but a poor sitting-room in the year '89 or '90, with my mother in it bidding me sing, Miss C. at the pianoforte, harpsichord more likely, and my little sister, Mary, with her round cheeks and blue eyes, wishing me to begin. What a great singer is that little boy to those loving relations, and how Miss C., with all her good nature, must be smiling at the importance of little boys to their mothers! *Alone, by the light of the moon,* was the "show-song," but *Dans votre lit* was the favourite with my sister, because, in her ignorance of the French language, she had associated the name of her brother with the sound of the last word.

The song was a somewhat gallant, but very decorous song, apostrophising a lady as a lily in the flower-bed. It was "silly, sooth," and "dallied with the innocence of love" in those days, after a fashion which might have excited livelier ideas in the more restricted imaginations of the present. The reader has seen, that my mother, notwithstanding her charitableness to the poor maid-servant, was a woman of

strict morals; the tone of the family conversation was scrupulously correct, though, perhaps, a little flowery and Thomson-like (Thomson was our favourite poet); yet the songs that were sung at that time by the most fastidious, might be thought a shade freer than would suit the like kind of society at present. Whether we are more innocent in having become more ashamed, I shall not judge. Assuredly, the singer of those songs was as innocent, as the mother that bade him sing them.

My little sister, Mary, died not long after. She was so young, that my only recollection of her, besides her blue eyes, is her love of her brother, and her custom of leading me by the hand to some stool, or seat on the staircase, and making me sing the song with her favourite burthen. We were the two youngest children, and about of an age.

I please myself with picturing to my imagination what was going forward during my childhood in the world of politics, literature, and public amusements; how far they interested my parents; and what amount of impression they may have left on my own mind. The American Revolution, which had driven my father from Philadelphia, was not long over, and the French Revolution was approaching. My father, for reasons which have already been mentioned, listened more and more to the new opinions, and my

mother listened, not only from love to her husband, but because she was still more deeply impressed by speculations regarding the welfare of human kind. The public mind, after a long and comparatively insipid tranquillity, had begun to be stirred by the eloquence of Burke; by the rivalries of Pitt and Fox; by the thanks which the king gave to Heaven for his recovery from his first illness; by the warlike and licentious energies of the Russian Empress, Catherine II., who partly shocked and partly amused them; and by the gentler gallantries and showy luxury of the handsome young Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV.

In the world of literature and art, Goldsmith and Johnson had gone; Cowper was not yet much known; the most prominent poets were Hayley and Darwin; the most distinguished prose-writer, Gibbon. Sir Joshua Reynolds was in his decline, so was Horace Walpole. The Kembles had come up in the place of Garrick. There were excellent comic actors in the persons of Edwin, Lewis, young Bannister, &c. They had O'Keeffe, an original humourist, to write for them. I have already noticed the vocal portion of the theatres. Miss Burney, afterwards Madame d'Arblay, surprised the reading world with her entertaining, but somewhat vulgar novels; and Mrs. Inchbald, Mrs. Charlotte Smith,

and a then anonymous author, Robert Bage (who wrote "Hermsprong," and "Man as He Is"), delighted liberal politicians with theirs. Mrs. Inchbald was also a successful dramatist; but her novels, which were written in a style to endure, were her chief merits.

My mother was one of their greatest admirers. I have heard her expatiate with delight on the characters in "Nature and Art," which, though not so masterly a novel as the "Simple Story," and a little wilful in the treatment, was full of matter for reflection, especially on conventional, and what are now called "class" points. Dr. Philpotts would have accused her of disaffection to the Church; and she would not have mended the matter by retreating on her admiration of Bishops Hoadley and Shipley. Her regard for the reverend author of "Meditations in a Flower Garden" would have made the doctor smile, though she would have recovered, perhaps, something of his good opinion by her admiration of Dr. Young and his "Night Thoughts." But Young deluded her with his groans against the world, and his lamentations for his daughter. She did not know that he was a preferment-hunter, who was prosperous enough to indulge in the "luxury of woe," and to groan because his toast was not thrice buttered.

Ranelagh and Vauxhall, as painted in Miss Burney's novels, were among the fashionable amusements of those days. My mother was neither rich nor gay enough to see much of them; but she was no ascetic, and she went where others did, as occasion served. My father, whose manners were at once high-bred and lively, had some great acquaintances; but I recollect none of them personally, except an old lady of quality, who (if memory does not strangely deceive me, and give me a personal share in what I only heard talked of; for old autobiographers of childhood must own themselves liable to such confusions) astounded me one day, by letting her false teeth slip out, and clapping them in again.

I had no idea of the existence of such phenomena, and could almost as soon have expected her to take off her head and re-adjust it. She lived in Red Lion Square, a quarter in different estimation from what it is now. It was at her house, I believe, that my father one evening met Wilkes. He did not know him by sight, and happening to fall into conversation with him, while the latter sat looking down, he said something in Wilkes's disparagement; on which the jovial demagogue looked up in his face, and burst out a laughing.

I do not exactly know how people dressed at that time; but I believe that sacks, and negligées, and

toupees were going out, and the pigtail and the simpler modern style of dress coming in. I recollect hearing my mother describe the misery of having her hair dressed two or three stories high, and of lying in it all night ready for some visit or spectacle next day. I think I also recollect seeing Wilkes himself in an old-fashioned flap-waistcoated suit of scarlet and gold; and I am sure I have seen Murphy, the dramatist, a good deal later, in a suit of a like fashion, though soberer, and a large cocked-hat. The cocked-hat in general survived till nearly the present century. It was superseded by the round one during the French Revolution. I remember our steward at school, a very solemn personage, making his appearance in one to our astonishment, and not a little to the diminution of his dignity. Some years later, I saw Mr. Pitt in a blue coat, buckskin breeches and boots, and a round hat, with powder and pigtail. He was thin and gaunt, with his hat off his forehead, and his nose in the air. Much about the same time I saw his friend, the first Lord Liverpool, a respectable looking old gentleman, in a brown wig. Later still, I saw Mr. Fox, fat and jovial, though he was then declining. He, who had been a "beau" in his youth, then looked something quaker-like as to dress, with plain coloured clothes, a broad round hat, white waistcoat, and, if I am not mistaken, white stockings. He was

standing in Parliament-street, just where the street commences as you leave Whitehall; and was making two young gentlemen laugh heartily at something which he seemed to be relating.

My father once took me—but I cannot say at what period of my juvenility—into both houses of Parliament. In the Commons, I saw Mr. Pitt sawing the the air, and occasionally turning to appeal to those about him, while he spoke in a loud, important, and hollow voice. When the persons he appealed to, said "Hear! hear!" I thought they said "Dear! dear!" in objection; and I wondered that he did not seem in the least degree disconcerted. The house of Lords, I must say (without meaning disrespect to an assembly which must always have contained some of the most accomplished men in the country), surprised me with the personally insignificant look of its members. I had, to be sure, conceived exaggerated notions of the magnates of all countries; and perhaps might have expected to behold a set of conscript fathers; but in no respect, real or ideal, did they appear to me in their corporate aspect, like anything which is understood by the word "noble." The Commons seemed to me to have the advantage; though they surprised me with lounging on the benches and retaining their hats. I was not then informed enough to know the difference between

apparent and substantial importance; much less aware of the positive exaltation, which that very simplicity, and that absence of pretension, gave to the most potent assembly in Europe.

CHAPTER III.

SCHOOL-DAYS.

Children's books. — Hogarth. — Christ-Hospital. — Moral and personal courage. — Anecdote of a racket-ball. — Fagging. — Visits of Queen Victoria to the school. — Details respecting that foundation, its manners and customs, modes of training, distinguished scholars, preachers, and schoolmasters, &c. — Tooke's Pantheon and the British Poets. — Scalded legs and the luxuries of a sick ward.

Books for children during the latter part of the eighteenth century had been in a bad way, with sordid and merely plodding morals, — ethics that were necessary perhaps for a certain stage in the progress of commerce and for its greatest ultimate purposes (undreamt of by itself), but which thwarted healthy and large views of society for the time being. They were the consequences of an altogether unintellectual state of trade, aided and abetted by such helps to morality as Hogarth's pictures of the Good and Bad Apprentice, which identified virtue with prosperity.

Hogarth, in most of his pictures, was as healthy a

moralist as he supposed himself, but not for the reasons which he supposed. The gods he worshipped were Truth and Prudence; but he saw more of the carnal than spiritual beauties of either. He was somewhat of a vulgarian in intention as well as mode. But wherever there is genius, there is a genial something greater than the accident of breeding, than the prevailing disposition, or even than the conscious design; and this portion of divinity within the painter, saw fair-play between his conventional and immortal part. It put the beauty of colour into his mirth, the counteraction of mirth into his melancholy, and a lesson beyond his intention into all: that is to say, it suggested redemptions and first causes for the objects of his satire; and thus vindicated the justice of nature, at the moment when he was thinking of little but the pragmaticalness of art.

The children's books in those days were Hogarth's pictures taken in their most literal acceptation. Every good boy was to ride in his coach, and be a lord mayor; and every bad boy was to be hung, or eaten by lions. The gingerbread was gilt, and the books were gilt like the gingerbread;—a "take in" the more gross, inasmuch as nothing could be plainer or less dazzling than the books of the same boys when they grew a little older. There was a lingering old ballad or

so in favour of the gallanter apprentices who tore out lions' hearts and astonished gazing sultans; and in antiquarian corners, Percy's "Reliques" were preparing a nobler age, both in poetry and prose. But the first counteraction came, as it ought, in the shape of a new book for children. The pool of mercenary and time-serving ethics was first blown over by the fresh country breeze of Mr. Day's "Sandford and Merton"—a production that I well remember, and shall ever be grateful to. It came in aid of my mother's perplexities between delicacy and hardihood, between courage and conscientiousness. It assisted the cheerfulness I inherited from my father; showed me that circumstances were not to crush a healthy gaiety, or the most masculine self-respect; and helped to supply me with the resolution of standing by a principle, not merely as a point of lowly or lofty sacrifice, but as a matter of common sense and duty, and a simple co-operation with the elements of natural welfare.

I went, nevertheless, to school at Christ-Hospital, an ultra-sympathizing and timid boy. The sight of boys fighting, from which I had been so anxiously withheld, frightened me as something devilish; and the least threat of corporal chastisement to a schoolfellow (for the lesson I had learned would have enabled me to bear it myself) affected me to tears.

I remember to this day, merely on that account, the name of a boy who was to receive punishment for some offence about a task. It was Lemoine. (I hereby present him with my respects, if he is an existing old gentleman, and hope he has not lost a pleasing countenance.) He had a cold and hoarseness; and his voice, while pleading in mitigation, sounded to me so pathetic, that I wondered how the master could have the heart to strike him.

Readers, who have been at a public school, may guess the consequence. I was not of a disposition to give offence, but neither was I quick to take it; and this, to the rude, energy-cultivating spirit of boys in general (not the worst thing in the world, till the pain in preparation for them can be diminished), was itself an offence. I therefore "went to the wall," till address, and the rousing of my own spirit, tended to right me; but I went through a great deal of fear in the process. I became convinced, that if I did not put moral courage in the place of personal, or, in other words, undergo any stubborn amount of pain and wretchedness, rather than submit to what I thought wrong, there was an end for ever, as far as I was concerned, of all those fine things that had been taught me, in vindication of right and justice.

Whether it was, however, that by the help of

animal spirits I possessed some portion of the courage for which the rest of the family was remarkable, or whether I was a veritable coward, born or bred, destined to show, in my person, how far a spirit of love and freedom could supersede the necessity of gall, and procure me the respect of those about me, certain it is, that although, except in one instance, I did my best to avoid, and succeeded honourably in avoiding, those personal encounters with my school-fellows, which, in confronting me on my own account with the face of a fellow-creature, threw me upon a sense of something devilish, and overwhelmed me with a sort of terror for both parties, yet I gained at an early period of boyhood the reputation of a romantic enthusiast, whose daring in behalf of a friend or a good cause nothing could put down. I was obliged to call in the aid of a feeling apart from my own sense of personal antagonism, and so merge the diabolical, as it were, into the human. In other words, I had not self-respect or gall enough to be angry on my own account, unless there was something at stake which, by concerning others, gave me a sense of support, and so pieced out my want with their abundance. The moment, however, that I felt thus supported, not only did all misgiving vanish from my mind, but contempt of pain took possession of my body; and

my poor mother might have gloried through her tears in the loving courage of her son.

I state the case thus proudly, both in justice to the manner in which she trained me, and because I conceive it may do good. I never fought with a boy but once, and then it was on my own account; but though I beat him, I was frightened, and eagerly sought his good will. I dared everything, however, from the biggest and strongest boys on other accounts, and was sometimes afforded an opportunity of showing my spirit of martyrdom. The truth is, I could suffer better than act; for the utmost activity of martyrdom is supported by a certain sense of passiveness. We are not bold from ourselves, but from something which compels us to be so, and which supports us by a sense of the necessity.

I had not been long in the school, when this spirit within me broke out in a manner that procured me great esteem. There was a monitor or "big boy" in office, who had a trick of entertaining himself by pelting lesser boys' heads with a hard ball. He used to throw it at this boy and that; make the *throwee* bring it back to him; and then send a rap with it on his cerebellum, as he was going off.

I had borne this spectacle one day for some time, when the family precepts rising within me, I said to myself, "I must go up to the monitor, and speak to

him about this." I issued forth accordingly, and to the astonishment of all present, who had never witnessed such an act of insubordination, I said, "You have no right to do this." The monitor, more astounded than any one, exclaimed "What?" I repeated my remonstrance. He treated me with the greatest contempt, as if disdaining even to strike me; and finished, by ordering me to "stand out." "Standing out" meant going to a particular spot in the hall where we dined. I did so; but just as the steward (the master in that place) was entering it, the monitor called to me to come away; and I neither heard any more of standing out, nor saw any more of the ball. I do not recollect that he even "spited" me afterwards, which must have been thought very remarkable. I seemed fairly to have taken away the breath of his calculations. The probability is, that he was a good lad, who had got a bad habit. Boys often become tyrants from a notion of its being grand and manly.

Another monitor, a year or two afterwards, took it into his head to force me to be his fag. Fag was not the term at our school, though it was in our vocabulary. Fag, with us, meant eatables. The learned derived the word from the Greek *phago*, to eat. I had so little objection to serve out of love, that there is no office I could not have performed for

good will; but it had been given out that I had determined not to be a menial on any other terms, and the monitor in question undertook to bring me to reason. He was a mild, good-looking boy about fourteen, remarkable for the neatness, and even elegance, of his appearance.

Receiving the refusal, for which he had been prepared, he showed me a knot in a long handkerchief, and told me I should receive a lesson from that handkerchief every day, with the addition of a fresh knot every time, unless I chose to alter my mind. I did not choose. I received the daily or rather nightly lesson, for it was then most convenient to strip me, and I came out of the ordeal in triumph. I never was fag to anybody; never made anybody's bed, or cleaned his shoes, or was the boy to get his tea, much less expected to stand as a screen for him before the fire; which I have seen done, though upon the whole the boys were very mild governors.

Lamb has noticed the character of the school for good manners, which he truly describes as being equally removed from the pride of aristocratic foundations and the servility of the charity-schools. I believe it retains this character still; though the changes which its system underwent not long ago, fusing all the schools into one another, and introducing a more generous diet, is thought by some not

to have been followed by an advance in other respects. I have heard the school charged, more lately, with having been suffered, in the intervals between the school hours, to fall out of the liberal and gentlemanly supervision of its best teachers, into the hands of an officious and ignorant sectarianism. But this may only have been a passing abuse.

I love and honour the school on private accounts; and I feel a public interest in its welfare, inasmuch as it is one of those judicious links with all classes, the importance of which, especially at a time like the present, cannot be too highly estimated; otherwise I should have said nothing to its possible, and I hope transient disadvantage. Queen Victoria recognised its importance, by visits and other personal condescensions, long before the late changes in Europe could have diminished the grace of their bestowal; and I will venture to say, that every one of those attentions will have sown for her generous nature a crop of loyalty worth having.

But for the benefit of such as are unacquainted with the city, or with a certain track of reading, I must give a more particular account of a school which in truth is a curiosity. Thousands of inhabitants of the metropolis have gone from west-end to east-end, and till the new hall was laid open to

view by the alterations in Newgate-street, never suspected that in the heart of it lies an old cloistered foundation, where a boy may grow up, as I did, among six hundred others, and know as little of the very neighbourhood as the world does of him.

Perhaps there is not a foundation in the country so truly English, taking that word to mean what Englishmen wish it to mean;—something solid, unpretending, of good character, and free to all. More boys are to be found in it, who issue from a greater variety of ranks, than in any other school in the kingdom: and as it is the most various, so it is the largest, of all the free schools. Nobility do not go there, except as boarders. Now and then a boy of a noble family may be met with, and he is reckoned an interloper, and against the charter; but the sons of poor gentry and London citizens abound; and with them, an equal share is given to the sons of tradesmen of the very humblest description, not omitting servants. I would not take my oath,—but I have a strong recollection, that in my time there were two boys, one of whom went up into the drawing-room to his father, the master of the house; and the other, down into the kitchen to *his* father, the coachman. One thing, however, I know to be certain, and it is the noblest of all: namely, that the boys themselves (at least it was so in my time) had

no sort of feeling of the difference of one another's ranks out of doors. The cleverest boy was the noblest, let his father be who he might. Christ-Hospital is a nursery of tradesmen, of merchants, of naval officers, of scholars; it has produced some of the greatest ornaments of their time; and the feeling among the boys themselves is, that it is a medium, between the patrician pretension of such schools as Eton and Westminster, and the plebeian submission of the charity schools. In point of University honours, it claims to be equal with the best; and though other schools can show a greater abundance of eminent names, I know not where many will be found who are a greater host in themselves. One original author is worth a hundred transmitters of elegance: and such a one is to be found in Richardson, who here received what education he possessed. Here Camden also received the rudiments of his. Bishop Stillingfleet, according to the Memoirs of Pepys, lately published, was brought up in the school. We have had many eminent scholars, two of them Greek professors, to-wit, Barnes, and the present Mr. Scholefield, the latter of whom attained an extraordinary succession of University honours. The rest are Markland; Middleton, late Bishop of Calcutta; and Mitchell, the translator of "Aristophanes." Christ-Hospital,

I believe, towards the close of the last century, and the beginning of the present, sent out more living writers, in its proportion, than any other school. There was Dr. Richards, author of the "Aboriginal Britons;" Dyer, whose life was one unbroken dream of learning and goodness, and who used to make us wonder with passing through the school-room (where no other person in "town-clothes" ever appeared) to consult books in the library; Le Grice, the translator of "Longus;" Horne, author of some well-known productions in controversial divinity; Surr, the novelist (not in the Grammar school); James White, the friend of Charles Lamb, and not unworthy of him, author of "Falstaff's Letters" (this was he who used to give an anniversary dinner to the chimney-sweepers, merrier than, though not so magnificent as Mrs. Montague's); Pitman, a celebrated preacher, editor of some school-books, and religious classics; Mitchell, before mentioned; myself, who stood next him; Barnes, who came next, the Editor of the "Times," than whom no man (if he had cared for it) could have been more certain of attaining celebrity for wit and literature; Townsend, a prebendary of Durham, author of "Armageddon," and several theological works; Gilly, another of the Durham prebendaries, who wrote the "Narrative of the Waldenses;" Scargill, a Unitarian minister, author of

some tracts on Peace and War, &c.; and lastly, whom I have kept by way of climax, Coleridge and Charles Lamb, two of the most original geniuses, not only of the day, but of the country. We have had an ambassador among us; but as he, I understand, is ashamed of us, we are hereby more ashamed of him, and accordingly omit him.

In the time of Henry the Eighth, Christ-Hospital was a monastery of Franciscan friars. Being dissolved among the others, Edward the Sixth, moved by a sermon of Bishop Ridley's, assigned the revenues of it to the maintenance and education of a certain number of poor orphan children, born of citizens of London. I believe there has been no law passed to alter the letter of this intention; which is a pity, since the alteration has taken place. An extension of it was probably very good, and even demanded by circumstances. I have reason, for one, to be grateful for it. But tampering with matters-of-fact among children is dangerous. They soon learn to distinguish between allowed poetical fiction and that which they are told, under severe penalties, never to be guilty of; and this early sample of contradiction between the thing asserted and the obvious fact, can do no good even in an establishment so plain-dealing in other respects as Christ-Hospital. The place is not only designated as an Orphan-house

in its Latin title, but the boys, in the prayers which they repeat every day, implore the pity of Heaven upon "us poor orphans." I remember the perplexity this caused me at a very early period. It is true, the word orphan may be used in a sense implying destitution of any sort; but this was not its Christ-Hospital intention; nor do the younger boys give it the benefit of that scholarly interpretation. There was another thing (now, I believe, done away) which existed in my time, and perplexed me still more. It seemed a glaring instance of the practice likely to result from the other assumption, and made me prepare for a hundred falsehoods and deceptions, which, mixed up with contradiction, as most things in society are, I sometimes did find, and oftener dreaded. I allude to a foolish custom they had in the ward which I first entered, and which was the only one that the company at the public suppers were in the habit of going into, of hanging up, by the side of each bed, a clean white napkin, which was supposed to be the one used by the occupiers. Now these napkins were only for show, the real towels being of the largest and coarsest kind. If the masters had been asked about them, they would doubtless have told the truth; perhaps the nurses would have done so. But the boys were not aware of this. There they saw these "white lies" hanging

before them, a conscious imposition; and I well remember how alarmed I used to feel, lest any of the company should direct their inquiries to me.

Christ-Hospital (for this is its proper name, and not Christ's Hospital) occupies a considerable portion of ground between Newgate-street, Giltspur-street, St. Bartholomew's, and Little Britain. There is a quadrangle with cloisters; and the square inside the cloisters is called the Garden, and most likely was the monastery garden. Its only delicious crop, for many years, has been pavement. Another large area, presenting the Grammar and Navigation schools, is also misnomered the Ditch; the town-ditch having formerly run that way. In Newgate-street is seen the Hall, or eating-room, one of the noblest in England, adorned with enormously long paintings by Verrio and others, and with an organ. A portion of the old quadrangle once contained the library of the monks, and was built or repaired by the famous Whittington, whose arms were to be seen outside; but alterations of late years have done it away.

In the cloisters, a number of persons lie buried, besides the officers of the house. Among them is Isabella, wife of Edward the Second, the "she-wolf of France." I was not aware of this circumstance then; but many a time, with a recollection of some lines in "Blair's Grave" upon me, have I run as hard

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as I could at night-time from my ward to another, in order to borrow the next volume of some ghostly romance. In one of the cloisters was an impression resembling a gigantic foot, which was attributed by some to the angry stamping of the ghost of a beadle's wife! A beadle was a higher sound to us than to most, as it involved ideas of detected apples in church-time, "skulking" (as it was called) out of bounds, and a power of reporting us to the masters. But fear does not stand upon rank and ceremony.

The wards, or sleeping-rooms, are twelve, and contained, in my time, rows of beds on each side, partitioned off, but connected with one another, and each having two boys to sleep in it. Down the middle ran the binns for holding bread and other things, and serving for a table when the meal was not taken in the hall; and over the binns hung a great homely chandelier.

To each of these wards a nurse was assigned, who was the widow of some decent liveryman of London, and who had the charge of looking after us at night-time, seeing to our washing, &c. and carving for us at dinner: all of which gave her a good deal of power, more than her name warranted. The nurses, however, were almost invariably very decent people, and performed their duty; which was not always the case with the young ladies, their daughters. There were

five schools; a grammar-school, a mathematical or navigation-school (added by Charles the Second), a writing, a drawing, and a reading school. Those who could not read when they came on the foundation, went into the last. There were few in the last-but-one, and I scarcely know what they did, or for what object. The writing-school was for those who were intended for trade and commerce; the mathematical, for boys who went as midshipmen into the naval and East India service; and the grammar-school for such as were designed for the Church, and to go to the University. The writing-school was by far the largest; and, what is very curious (which is not the case now), all these schools were kept quite distinct; so that a boy might arrive at the age of fifteen in the grammar-school, and not know his multiplication-table; which was the case with myself. Nor do I know it to this day! Shades of Horace Walpole and of Lord Lyttelton! come to my assistance, and enable me to bear the confession: but so it is. The fault was not my fault at the time; but I ought to have repaired it when I went out in the world; and great is the mischief which it has done me.

Most of these schools had several masters; besides whom there was a steward, who took care of our subsistence, and who had a general superintendence

over all hours and circumstances not connected with teaching. The masters had almost all been in the school, and might expect pensions or livings in their old age. Among those in my time, the mathematical master was Mr. Wales, a man well known for his science, who had been round the world with Captain Cook; for which we highly venerated him. He was a good man, of plain simple manners, with a heavy large person and a benign countenance. When he was in Otaheite, the natives played him a trick while bathing, and stole his small-clothes; which we used to think a liberty, scarcely credible. The name of the steward, a thin stiff man of invincible formality of demeanour, admirably fitted to render encroachment impossible, was Hathaway. We of the grammar-school used to call him "the Yeoman," on account of Shakspeare having married the daughter of a man of that name, designated as "a substantial yeoman."

Our dress was of the coarsest and quaintest kind, but was respected out of doors, and is so. It consisted of a blue drugget gown, or body, with ample coats to it; a yellow vest underneath in winter-time; small-clothes of Russia duck; worsted yellow stockings; a leathern girdle; and a little black worsted cap, usually carried in the hand. I believe it was the ordinary dress of children in humble life, during

the reign of the Tudors. We used to flatter ourselves that it was taken from the monks; and there went a monstrous tradition, that at one period it consisted of blue velvet with silver buttons. It was said also, that during the blissful era of the blue velvet, we had roast mutton for supper, but that the small-clothes not being then in existence, and the mutton suppers too luxurious, the eatables were given up for the ineffables.

A malediction, at heart, always followed the memory of him who had taken upon himself to decide so preposterously. To say the truth, we were not too well fed at that time, either in quantity or quality; and we could not enter with our hungry imaginations into these remote philosophies. Our breakfast was bread and water, for the beer was too bad to drink. The bread consisted of the half of a three-halfpenny loaf, according to the prices then current. I suppose it would now be a good twopenny one; certainly not a threepenny. This was not much for growing boys, who had had nothing to eat from six or seven o'clock the preceding evening. For dinner, we had the same quantity of bread, with meat only every other day, and that consisting of a small slice, such as would be given to an infant three or four years old. Yet even that, with all our hunger, we very often left

half-eaten; the meat was so tough. On the other days, we had a milk-porridge, ludicrously thin; or rice-milk, which was better. There were no vegetables or puddings. Once a month we had roast beef; and twice a year (I blush to think of the eagerness with which it was looked for!) a dinner of pork. One was roast, and the other boiled; and on the latter occasion we had our only pudding, which was of peas. I blush to remember this, not on account of our poverty, but on account of the sordidness of the custom. There had much better have been none. For supper, we had a like piece of bread, with butter or cheese; and then to bed, "with what appetite we might."

Our routine of life was this. We rose to the call of a bell, at six in summer, and seven in winter; and after combing ourselves, and washing our hands and faces, went at the call of another bell to breakfast. All this took up about an hour. From breakfast we proceeded to school, where we remained till eleven, winter and summer, and then had an hour's play. Dinner took place at twelve. Afterwards was a little play till one, when we again went to school, and remained till five in summer and four in winter. At six was the supper. We used to play after it in summer till eight. In winter, we proceeded from supper to bed. On Sundays, the

school-time of the other days was occupied in church, both morning and evening; and as the Bible was read to us every day before every meal, and on going to bed, besides prayers and graces, we rivalled the monks in the religious part of our duties.

The effect was certainly not what was intended. The Bible perhaps was read thus frequently, in the first instance, out of contradiction to the papal spirit that had so long kept it locked up; but, in the eighteenth century, the repetition was not so desirable among a parcel of hungry boys, anxious to get their modicum to eat. On Sunday, what with the long service in the morning, the service again after dinner, and the inaudible and indifferent tones of some of the preachers, it was unequivocally tiresome. I, for one, who had been piously brought up, and continued to have religion inculcated on me by father and mother, began secretly to become as indifferent as I thought the preachers; and, though the morals of the school were in the main excellent and exemplary, we all felt, without knowing it, that it was the orderliness and example of the general system that kept us so, and not the religious part of it; which seldom entered our heads at all, and only tired us when it did.

I am not begging any question here, or speaking f
or against. I am only stating a fact. Others

argue, that, however superfluous the readings and prayers might have been, a good general spirit of religion must have been inculcated, because a great deal of virtue and religious charity is known to have issued out of that school, and no fanaticism. I shall not dispute the point. The case is true; but not the less true is what I speak of. Latterly there came, as our parish clergyman, Mr. Crowther, a nephew of our famous Richardson, and worthy of the talents and virtues of his kinsman, though inclining to a mode of faith which is supposed to produce more faith than charity. But, till then, the persons who were in the habit of getting up in our church pulpit and reading-desk, might as well have hummed a tune to their diaphragms. They inspired us with nothing but mimicry. The name of the morning-reader was Salt. He was a worthy man, I believe, and might, for aught we knew, have been a clever one; but he had it all to himself. He spoke in his throat, with a sound as if he was weak and corpulent; and was famous among us for saying "murracles" instead of "miracles." When we imitated him, this was the only word we drew upon: the rest was unintelligible uffocation. Our usual evening preacher was Mr. andiford, who had the reputation of learning and ty. It was of no use to us, except to make us

associate the ideas of learning and piety in the pulpit with inaudible hum-drum. Mr. Sandiford's voice was hollow and low; and he had a habit of dipping up and down over his book, like a chicken drinking. Mr. Salt was eminent for a single word. Mr. Sandiford surpassed him, for he had two audible phrases. There was, it is true, no great variety in them. One was "the dispensation of Moses;" the other (with a due interval of hum), "the Mosaic dispensation." These he used to repeat so often, that in our caricatures of him they sufficed for an entire portrait. The reader may conceive a large church (it was Christ Church, Newgate-street), with six hundred boys, seated like charity-children up in the air, on each side of the organ, Mr. Sandiford humming in the valley, and a few maid-servants who formed his afternoon congregation. We did not dare to go to sleep. We were not allowed to read. The great boys used to get those that sat behind them to play with their hair. Some whispered to their neighbours, and the others thought of their lessons and tops. I can safely say, that many of us would have been good listeners, and most of us attentive ones, if the clergyman could have been heard. As it was, I talked as well as the rest, or thought of my exercise. Sometimes we could not help joking and laughing over our weariness; and then the fear was, lest the

steward had seen us. It was part of the business of the steward to preside over the boys in church-time. He sat aloof, in a place where he could view the whole of his flock. There was a ludicrous kind of revenge we had of him, whenever a particular part of the Bible was read. This was the parable of the Unjust Steward. The boys waited anxiously till the passage commenced; and then, as if by a general conspiracy, at the words "thou unjust steward," the whole school turned their eyes upon this unfortunate officer, who sat

"Like Teneriff or Atlas unremoved."

We persuaded ourselves, that the more unconscious he looked, the more he was acting.

By a singular chance, there were two clergymen, occasional preachers in our pulpit, who were as loud and startling, as the others were somniferous. One of them, with a sort of flat, high voice, had a remarkable way of making a ladder of it, climbing higher and higher to the end of the sentence. It ought to be described by the gamut, or written up-hill. Perhaps it was an association of ideas, that has made me recollect one particular passage. It is where Ahab consults the prophets, asking them whether he shall go up to Ramoth Gilead to battle. "Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? and they

said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king." He used to give this out in such a manner, that you might have fancied him climbing out of the pulpit, sword in hand. The other was a tall, thin man, with a noble voice. He would commence a prayer in a most stately and imposing manner, full both of dignity and feeling; and then, as if tired of it, would hurry over all the rest. Indeed, he began every prayer in this way, and was as sure to hurry it; for which reason, the boys hailed the sight of him, as they knew they should get sooner out of church. When he commenced, in his noble style, the band seemed to tremble against his throat, as though it had been a sounding-board.

Being able to read, and knowing a little Latin, I was put at once into the Under Grammar School. How much time I wasted there in learning the accidence and syntax, I cannot say; but it seems to me a long while. My grammar seemed always to open at the same place. Things are managed differently now, I believe, in this as well as in many other respects. Great improvements have been made in the whole establishment. The boys feed better, learn better, and have longer holidays in the country. In my time, they never slept out of the school, but on one occasion, during the whole of their stay; this was for

three weeks in summer-time, which I have spoken of, and which they were bound to pass at a certain distance from London. They now have these holidays with a reasonable frequency; and they all go to the different schools, instead of being confined, as they were then, some to nothing but writing and cyphering, and some to the languages. It has been doubted by some of us elders, whether this system will beget such temperate, proper students, with pale faces, as the other did. I dare say, our successors are not afraid of us. I had the pleasure, some years since, of dining in company with a Deputy Grecian, who, with a stout rosy-faced person, had not failed to acquire the scholarly turn for joking, which is common to a classical education; as well as those simple, becoming manners, made up of modesty and proper confidence, which have been often remarked as distinguishing the boys on this foundation.

"But what is a Deputy Grecian?" Ah, reader! to ask that question, and at the same time to know anything at all worth knowing, would at one time, according to our notion of things, have been impossible. When I entered the school, I was shown three gigantic boys, young men rather (for the eldest was between seventeen and eighteen), who, I was told, were going to the University. These were the Grecians. They were the three head boys

of the Grammar School, and were understood to have their destiny fixed for the Church. The next class to these, like a College of Cardinals to those three Popes (for every Grecian was in our eyes infallible), were the Deputy Grecians. The former were supposed to have completed their Greek studies, and were deep in Sophocles and Euripides. The latter were thought equally competent to tell you anything respecting Homer and Demosthenes. These two classes, and the head boys of the Navigation School, held a certain rank over the whole place, both in school and out. Indeed, the whole of the Navigation School, upon the strength of cultivating their valour for the navy, and being called King's Boys, had succeeded in establishing an extraordinary pretension to respect. This they sustained in a manner as laughable to call to mind, as it was grave in its reception. It was an etiquette among them never to move out of a right line as they walked, whoever stood in their way. I believe there was a secret understanding with Grecians and Deputy Grecians, the former of whom were unquestionably lords paramount in point of fact, and stood and walked aloof when all the rest of the school were marshalled in bodies. I do not remember any clashing between these civil and naval powers; but I remember well my astonishment when I first beheld some of my little com-

rades overthrown by the progress of one of these very straightforward marine personages, who walked on with as tranquil and unconscious a face as if nothing had happened. It was not a fierce-looking push; there seemed to be no intention in it. The insolence lay in the boy not appearing to know that such inferior creatures existed. It was always thus, wherever he came. If aware, the boys got out of his way; if not, down they went, one or more; away rolled the top or the marbles, and on walked the future captain—

> In maiden navigation, frank and free.

These boys wore a badge on the shoulder, of which they were very proud; though in the streets it must have helped to confound them with charity boys. For charity boys, I must own, we all had a great contempt, or thought so. We did not dare to know that there might have been a little jealousy of our own position in it, placed as we were midway between the homeliness of the common charity-school and the dignity of the foundations. We called them "*chizzy-wags*," and had a particular scorn and hatred of their nasal tone in singing.

The under grammar-master, in my time, was the Reverend Mr. Field. He was a good-looking man, very gentlemanly, and always dressed at the neatest. I believe he once wrote a play. He had the repu-

tation of being admired by the ladies. A man of a more handsome incompetence for his situation perhaps did not exist. He came late of a morning; went away soon in the afternoon; and used to walk up and down, languidly bearing his cane, as if it was a lily, and hearing our eternal *Dominuses* and *As in præsenti's* with an air of ineffable endurance. Often he did not hear at all. It was a joke with us, when any of our friends came to the door, and we asked his permission to go to them, to address him with some preposterous question wide of the mark; to which he used to assent. We would say, for instance, "Are you not a great fool, sir?" or "Isn't your daughter a pretty girl?" to which he would reply, "Yes, child." When he condescended to hit us with the cane, he made a face as if he was taking physic. Miss Field, an agreeable-looking girl, was one of the goddesses of the school; as far above us as if she had lived on Olympus. Another was Miss Patrick, daughter of the lamp-manufacturer in Newgate-street. I do not rememember her face so well, not seeing it so often; but she abounded in admirers. I write the names of these ladies at full length, because there is nothing that should hinder their being pleased at having caused us so many agreeable visions. We used to identify them with the picture of Venus in Tooke's Pantheon.

The other master, the upper one, Boyer—famous for the mention of him by Coleridge and Lamb—was a short stout man, inclining to punchiness, with large face and hands, an aquiline nose, long upper lip, and a sharp mouth. His eye was close and cruel. The spectacles which he wore threw a balm over it. Being a clergyman, he dressed in black, with a powdered wig. His clothes were cut short; his hands hung out of the sleeves, with tight wristbands, as if ready for execution; and as he generally wore grey worsted stockings, very tight, with a little balustrade leg, his whole appearance presented something formidably succinct, hard, and mechanical. In fact, his weak side, and undoubtedly his natural destination, lay in carpentry; and he accordingly carried, in a side-pocket made on purpose, a carpenter's rule.

The merits of Boyer, consisted in his being a good verbal scholar, and conscientiously acting up to the letter of time and attention. I have seen him nod at the close of the long summer school-hours, wearied out; and I should have pitied him, if he had taught us to do anything but fear. Though a clergyman, very orthodox, and of rigid morals, he indulged himself in an oath, which was "God's-my-life!" When you were out in your lesson, he turned upon you a round staring eye like a fish; and he had a trick of pinching

you under the chin, and by the lobes of the ears, till he would make the blood come. He has many times lifted a boy off the ground in this way. He was, indeed, a proper tyrant, passionate and capricious; would take violent likes and dislikes to the same boys; fondle some without any apparent reason, though he had a leaning to the servile, and, perhaps, to the sons of rich people; and he would persecute others in a manner truly frightful. I have seen him beat a sickly-looking, melancholy boy (C———n) about the head and ears, till the poor fellow, hot, dry-eyed, and confused, seemed lost in bewilderment. C———n, not long after he took orders, died out of his senses. I do not attribute that catastrophe to the master; and of course he could not wish to do him any lasting mischief. He had no imagination of any sort. But there is no saying how far his treatment of the boy might have contributed to prevent a cure. Tyrannical schoolmasters nowadays are to be found, perhaps, exclusively in such inferior schools as those described with such masterly and indignant edification by my friend Charles Dickens; but they formerly seemed to have abounded in all; and masters, as well as boys, have escaped the chance of many bitter reflections, since a wiser and more generous intercourse has come up between them.

I have some stories of Boyer, that will com-

pletely show his character, and at the same time relieve the reader's indignation by something ludicrous in their excess. We had a few boarders at the school; boys, whose parents were too rich to let them go on the foundation. Among them, in my time, was Carlton, a son of Lord Dorchester; Macdonald, one of the Lord Chief Baron's sons; and R——, the son of a rich merchant. Carlton, who was a fine fellow, manly, and full of good sense, took his new master and his caresses very coolly, and did not want them. Little Macdonald also could dispense with them, and would put on his delicate gloves after lesson, with an air as if he resumed his patrician plumage. R—— was meeker, and willing to be encouraged; and there would the master sit, with his arm round his tall waist, helping him to his Greek verbs, as a nurse does bread and milk to an infant; and repeating them, when he missed, with a fond patience, that astonished us criminals in drugget.

Very different was the treatment of a boy on the foundation, whose friends, by some means or other, had prevailed on the master to pay him an extra attention, and try to get him on. He had come into the school at an age later than usual, and could hardly read. There was a book used by the learners in reading, called "Dialogues between a Missionary and an Indian." It was a poor performance, full of

inconclusive arguments and other commonplaces. The boy in question used to appear with this book in his hand in the middle of the school, the master standing behind him. The lesson was to begin. Poor ——, whose great fault lay in a deep-toned drawl of his syllables and the omission of his stops, stood half-looking at the book, and half-casting his eye towards the right of him, whence the blows were to proceed. The master looked over him; and his hand was ready. I am not exact in my quotation at this distance of time; but the *spirit* of one of the passages that I recollect was to the following purport, and thus did the teacher and his pupil proceed:—

Master. "Now, young man, have a care; or I'll set you a *swinging* task." (A common phrase of his.)

Pupil. (Making a sort of heavy bolt at his calamity, and never remembering his stop at the word Missionary). "*Missionary* Can you see the wind?"

(Master gives him a slap on the cheek.)

Pupil. (Raising his voice to a cry, and still forgetting his stop.) "*Indian* No!"

Master. "God's-my-life, young man! have a care how you provoke me."

Pupil. (Always forgetting the stop.) "*Missionary* How then do you know that there is such a thing?"

(Here a terrible thump.)

Pupil. (With a shout of agony.) "*Indian* Because I feel it."

One anecdote of his injustice will suffice for all. It is of ludicrous enormity; nor do I believe anything more flagrantly wilful was ever done by himself. I heard Mr. C——, the sufferer, now a most respectable person in a government office, relate it with a due relish, long after quitting the school. The master was in the habit of "spiting" C——; that is to say, of taking every opportunity to be severe with him; nobody knew why. One day he comes into the school, and finds him placed in the middle of it with three other boys. He was not in one of his worst humours, and did not seem inclined to punish them, till he saw his antagonist. "Oh, oh! sir," said he; "what, you are among them, are you?" and gave him an exclusive thump on the face. He then turned to one of the Grecians, and said, "I have not time to flog all these boys; make them draw lots, and I'll punish one." The lots were drawn, and C——'s was favourable. "Oh, oh!" returned the master, when he saw them, "you have escaped, have you, sir?" and pulling out his watch, and turning again to the Grecian observed, that he found he *had* time to punish the whole three; "and, sir," added he to C——, with another slap, "I'll begin with *you*."

He then took the boy into the library and flogged him; and, on issuing forth again, had the face to say, with an air of indifference, "I have not time, after all, to punish these two other boys: let them take care how they provoke me another time."

Often did I wish that I was a fairy, in order to play him tricks like a Caliban. We used to sit and fancy what we should do with his wig; how we would hamper and vex him; "put knives in his pillow, and halters in his pew." To venture on a joke in our own mortal persons, was like playing with Polyphemus. One afternoon, when he was nodding with sleep over a lesson, a boy of the name of Meaer, who stood behind him, ventured to take a pin, and begin advancing with it up his wig. The hollow, exhibited between the wig and the nape of the neck, invited him. The boys encouraged this daring act of gallantry. Nods and becks, and then whispers of "Go it, M.!" gave more and more valour to his hand. On a sudden, the master's head falls back; he starts, with eyes like a shark; and seizing the unfortunate culprit, who stood helpless in the act of holding the pin, caught hold of him, fiery with passion. A "swinging task" ensued, which kept him at home all the holidays. One of these tasks would consist of an impossible quantity of Virgil, which the learner, unable to retain it at

once, wasted his heart and soul out "to get up," till it was too late.

Sometimes, however, our despot got into a dilemma, and then he did not know how to get out of it. A boy, now and then, would be roused into open and fierce remonstrance. I recollect S., afterwards one of the mildest of preachers, starting up in his place, and pouring forth on his astonished hearer a torrent of invectives and threats, which the other could only answer by looking pale, and uttering a few threats in return. Nothing came of it. He did not like such matters to go before the governors. Another time, Favell, a Grecian, a youth of high spirit, whom he had struck, went to the school-door, opened it, and, turning round with the handle in his grasp, told him he would never set foot again in the place, unless he promised to treat him with more delicacy. "Come back, child; come back!" said the other, pale, and in a faint voice. There was a dead silence. Favell came back, and nothing more was done.

A sentiment, unaccompanied with something practical, would have been lost upon him. D——, who went afterwards to the Military College at Woolwich, played him a trick, apparently between jest and earnest, which amused us exceedingly. He was to be flogged; and the dreadful door of the library

was approached. (They did not invest the books with flowers, as Montaigne recommends.) Down falls the criminal, and twisting himself about the master's legs, which he does the more when the other attempts to move, repeats without ceasing, "Oh, good God! consider my father, sir; my father, sir; you know my father!" The point was felt to be getting ludicrous, and was given up. P——, now a popular preacher, was in the habit of entertaining the boys that way. He was a regular wag; and would snatch his jokes out of the very flame and fury of the master, like snap-dragon. Whenever the other struck him, P. would get up; and half to avoid the blows, and half render them ridiculous, begin moving about the school-room, making all sorts of antics. When he was struck in the face, he would clap his hand with affected vehemence to the place, and cry as rapidly, "*Oh*, Lord!" If the blow came on the arm, he would grasp his arm, with a similar exclamation. The master would then go, driving and kicking him; while the patient accompanied every blow with the same comments and illustrations, making faces to us by way of index.

What a bit of a golden age was it, when the Rev. Mr. Steevens, one of the under grammar-masters, took his place, on some occasion, for a short time! Steevens was short and fat, with a handsome,

cordial face. You loved him as you looked at him; and seemed as if you should love him the more, the fatter he became. I stammered when I was at that time of life: which was an infirmity, that used to get me into terrible trouble with the master. Steevens used to say, on the other hand, "Here comes our little black-haired friend, who stammers so. Now, let us see what we can do for him." The consequence was, I did not hesitate half so much as with the other. When I did, it was out of impatience to please him.

Such of us were not liked the better by the master, as were in favour with his wife. She was a sprightly, good-looking woman, with black eyes; and was beheld with transport by the boys, whenever she appeared at the school-door. Her husband's name, uttered in a mingled tone of good-nature and imperativeness, brought him down from his seat with smiling haste. Sometimes he did not return. On entering the school one day, he found a boy eating cherries. "Where did you get those cherries?" exclaimed he, thinking the boy had nothing to say for himself. "Mrs. Boyer gave them me, sir." He turned away, scowling with disappointment.

Speaking of fruit, reminds me of a pleasant trait on the part of a Grecian of the name of Le Grice. He was the maddest of all the great boys in my

time; clever, full of address, and not hampered with modesty. Remote rumours, not lightly to be heard, fell on our ears, respecting pranks of his amongst the nurses' daughters. He had a fair handsome face, with delicate aquiline nose, and twinkling eyes. I remember his astonishing me, when I was "a new boy," with sending me for a bottle of water, which he proceeded to pour down the back of G. a grave Deputy Grecian. On the master asking him one day, why he, of all the boys, had given up no exercise (it was a particular exercise that they were bound to do in the course of a long set of holidays), he said he had had "a lethargy." The extreme impudence of this puzzled the master; and I believe nothing came of it. But what I alluded to about the fruit was this. Le Grice was in the habit of eating apples in school-time, for which he had been often rebuked. One day, having particularly pleased the master, the latter, who was eating apples himself, and who would now and then with great ostentation present a boy with some half-penny token of his mansuetude, called out to his favourite of the moment; —"Le Grice, here is an apple for you." Le Grice, who felt his dignity hurt as a Grecian, but was more pleased at having this opportunity of mortifying his reprover, replied, with an exquisite tranquillity of assurance, "Sir, I never eat apples." For this,

among other things, the boys adored him. Poor fellow! He and Favell (who, though very generous, was said to be a little too sensible of an humble origin) wrote to the Duke of York, when they were at College, for commissions in the army. The Duke good-naturedly sent them. Le Grice died in the West Indies. Favell was killed in one of the battles in Spain, but not before he had distinguished himself as an officer and a gentleman.

The Upper Grammar School was divided into four classes, or forms. The two under ones were called Little and Great Erasmus; the two upper were occupied by the Grecians and Deputy Grecians. We used to think the title of Erasmus taken from the great scholar of that name; but the sudden appearance of a portrait among us, bearing to be the likeness of a certain Erasmus Smith, Esq., shook us terribly in this opinion, and was a hard trial of our gratitude. We scarcely relished this perpetual company of our benefactor, watching us, as he seemed to do, with his omnipresent eyes. I believe he was a rich merchant, and that the forms of Little and Great Erasmus were really named after him. It was but a poor consolation to think that he himself, or his great-uncle, might have been named after Erasmus. Little Erasmus learned Ovid; Great Erasmus, Virgil, Terence, and the Greek Testa-

ment. The Deputy Grecians, were in Homer, Cicero, and Demosthenes; the Grecians, in the Greek plays and the mathematics.

When a boy entered the Upper School, he was understood to be in the road to the University, provided he had inclination and talents for it; but, as only one Grecian a year went to College, the drafts out of Great and Little Erasmus into the writing-school were numerous. A few also became Deputy Grecians without going farther, and entered the world from that form. Those who became Grecians, always went to the University, though not always into the Church; which was reckoned a departure from the contract. When I first came to school, at seven years old, the names of the Grecians were Allen, Favell, Thomson, and Le Grice, brother of the Le Grice above-mentioned, and now a clergyman in Cornwall. Charles Lamb had lately been Deputy Grecian; and Coleridge had left for the University.

The master, inspired by his subject with an eloquence beyond himself, once called him, "that sensible fool, Cŏlĕridge;" pronouncing the word like a dactyl. Coleridge must have alternately delighted and bewildered him. The compliment, as to the bewildering, was returned, if not the delight. The pupil, I am told, said he dreamt of the master all

his life, and that his dreams were horrible. A bon-mot of his is recorded, very characteristic both of pupil and master. Coleridge, when he heard of his death, said, "It was lucky that the cherubim who took him to heaven were nothing but faces and wings, or he would infallibly have flogged them by the way." This was his esoterical opinion of him. His outward and subtler opinion, or opinion exoterical, he favoured the public with in his Literary Life. He praised him, among other things, for his good taste in poetry, and his not suffering the boys to get into the commonplaces of Castalian Streams, Invocations to the Muses, &c. Certainly there were no such things in our days,—at least, to the best of my remembrance. But I do not think the master saw through them, out of a perception of anything farther. His objection to a commonplace must have been itself commonplace.

I do not remember seeing Coleridge when I was a child. Lamb's visits to the school, after he left it, I remember well, with his fine intelligent face. Little did I think I should have the pleasure of sitting with it in after-times as an old friend, and seeing it careworn and still finer. Allen, the Grecian, was so handsome, though in another and more obvious way, that running one day against a barrow-woman in the street, and turning round to appease

her in the midst of her abuse, she said, "Where are you driving to, you great hulking, good-for-nothing, —beautiful fellow, God bless you!" Le Grice the elder was a wag, like his brother, but more staid. He went into the Church, as he ought to do, and married a rich widow. He published a translation, abridged, of the celebrated pastoral of Longus; and report at school made him the author of a little anonymous tract on the *Art of Poking the Fire.*

Few of us cared for any of the books that were taught: and no pains were taken to make us do so. The boys had no helps to information, bad or good, except what the master afforded them respecting manufactures;—a branch of knowledge, to which, as I before observed, he had a great tendency, and which was the only point on which he was enthusiastic and gratuitous. I do not blame him for what he taught us of this kind: there was a use in it, beyond what he was aware of; but it was the only one on which he volunteered any assistance. In this he took evident delight. I remember, in explaining pigs of iron or lead to us, he made a point of crossing one of his legs with the other, and cherishing it up and down with great satisfaction, saying, "A pig, children, is about the thickness of my leg." Upon which, with a slavish pretence of novelty, we all looked at it, as if he had not told us so a hun-

dred times. In everything else we had to hunt out our own knowledge. He would not help us with a word till he had ascertained that we had done all we could to learn the meaning of it ourselves. This discipline was useful; and, in this and every other respect, we had all the advantages which a mechanical sense of right, and a rigid exaction of duty, could afford us; but no farther. The only superfluous grace that he was guilty of, was the keeping a manuscript book, in which, by a rare luck, the best exercise in English verse was occasionally copied out for immortality! To have verses in "the Book" was the rarest and highest honour conceivable to our imaginations.

But how little did I care for any verses at that time, except English ones; I had no regard even for Ovid. I read and knew nothing of Horace; though I had got somehow a liking for his character. Cicero I disliked, as I cannot help doing still. Demosthenes I was inclined to admire, but did not know why, and would very willingly have given up him and his difficulties together. Homer I regarded with horror, as a series of lessons, which I had to learn by heart before I understood him. When I had to conquer, in this way, lines which I had not construed, I had recourse to a sort of artificial memory, by which I associated the Greek

words with sounds that had a meaning in English. Thus, a passage about Thetis I made to bear on some circumstance that had taken place in the school. An account of a battle was converted into a series of jokes; and the master, while I was saying my lesson to him in trepidation, little suspected what a figure he was often cutting in the text. The only classic I remember having any love for was Virgil; and that was for the episode of Nisus and Euryalus.

But there were three books which I read in whenever I could, and which often got me into trouble. These were Tooke's *Pantheon*, Lempriere's *Classical Dictionary*, and Spence's *Polymetis*, the great folio edition with plates. Tooke was a prodigious favourite with us. I see before me, as vividly now as ever, his Mars and Apollo, his Venus and Aurora, which I was continually trying to copy; the Mars, coming on furiously in his car; Apollo, with his radiant head, in the midst of shades and fountains; Aurora with hers, a golden dawn; and Venus, very handsome, we thought, and not looking too modest, in "a slight cymar." It is curious how completely the graces of the Pagan theology overcame with us the wise cautions and reproofs that were set against it in the pages of Mr. Tooke. Some years after my departure from school, happening to look at the work in question, I was surprised to find so much

of that matter in him. When I came to reflect, I had a sort of recollection that we used occasionally to notice it, as something inconsistent with the rest of the text,—strange, and odd, and like the interference of some pedantic old gentleman. This, indeed, is pretty nearly the case. The author has also made a strange mistake about Bacchus, whom he represents, both in his text and his print, as a mere belly-god; a corpulent child, like the Bacchus bestriding a tun. This is any thing but classical. The truth is, it was a sort of pious fraud, like many other things palmed upon antiquity. Tooke's *Pantheon* was written originally in Latin by the Jesuits.

Our Lempriere was a fund of entertainment. Spence's *Polymetis* was not so easily got at. There was also something in the text that did not invite us; but we admired the fine large prints. However, Tooke was the favourite. I cannot divest myself of a notion, to this day, that there is something really clever in the picture of Apollo. The Minerva we "could not abide;" Juno was no favourite, for all her throne and her peacock; and we thought Diana too pretty. The instinct against these three goddesses begins early. I used to wonder how Juno and Minerva could have the insolence to dispute the apple with Venus.

In those times, Cooke's edition of the British poets

came up. I had got an odd volume of Spenser; and I fell passionately in love with Collins and Gray. How I loved those little sixpenny numbers containing whole poets! I doated on their size; I doated on their type, on their ornaments, on their wrappers containing lists of other poets, and on the engravings from Kirk. I bought them over and over again, and used to get up select sets, which disappeared like buttered crumpets; for I could resist neither giving them away, nor possessing them. When the master tormented me, when I used to hate and loathe the sight of Homer, and Demosthenes, and Cicero, I would comfort myself with thinking of the sixpence in my pocket, with which I should go out to Paternoster-row, when school was over, and buy another number of an English poet.

I was already fond of writing verses. The first I remember were in honour of the Duke of York's "Victory at Dunkirk;" which victory, to my great mortification, turned out to be a defeat. I compared him with Achilles and Alexander; or should rather say, trampled upon those heroes in the comparison. I fancied him riding through the field, and shooting right and left of him! Afterwards, when in Great Erasmus, I wrote a poem called *Winter*, in consequence of reading Thomson; and when Deputy Grecian, I completed some hundred stanzas of another,

called the *Fairy King*, which was to be in emulation of Spenser! I also wrote a long poem in irregular Latin verses (such as they were), entitled *Thor*; the consequence of reading Gray's Odes, and Mallett's *Northern Antiquities*. English verses were the only exercise I performed with satisfaction. Themes, or prose essays, I wrote so badly, that the master was in the habit of contemptuously crumpling them up in his hand, and calling out, "Here, children, there is something to amuse you." Upon which the servile part of the boys would jump up, seize the paper, and be amused accordingly.

The essays must have been very absurd, no doubt; but those who would have tasted the ridicule best, were the last to move. There was an absurdity in giving us such essays to write. They were upon a given subject, generally a moral one; such as ambition, or the love of money: and the regular process in the manufacture was this. You wrote out the subject very fairly at top, *Quid non mortalia*, &c. or *Crescit amor nummi*. Then the ingenious thing was to repeat this apophthegm in as many words and round-about phrases as possible; which took up a good bit of the paper. Then you attempted to give a reason or two, why *amor nummi* was bad; or on what accounts heroes ought to eschew ambition; —after which naturally came a few examples, got

out of Plutarch, or the *Selectæ e Profanis;* and the happy moralist concluded with signing his name. Somebody speaks of schoolboys going about to one another on these occasions, and asking for "a little sense." That was not the phrase with us; it was "a thought."—"P——, can you give me a thought?" —"C——, for God's sake, help me to a thought, for it only wants ten minutes to eleven." It was a joke with P——, who knew my hatred of themes, and how I used to hurry over them, to come to me at a quarter to eleven, and say, "Hunt, have you *begun* your theme?"—"Yes, P——." He then, when the quarter of an hour had expired and the bell tolled, came again, and, with a sort of rhyming formula to the other question, said, "Hunt, have you *done* your theme?"—"Yes, P——."

How I dared to trespass in this way upon the patience of the master, I cannot conceive. I suspect that the themes appeared to him more absurd than careless. Perhaps another thing perplexed him. The master was rigidly orthodox; the school-establishment also was orthodox and high tory; and there was just then a little perplexity, arising from the free doctrines inculcated by the books we learned, and the new and alarming echo of them struck on the ears of power by the French Revolution. My father was in the habit of expressing his opinions. He did

not conceal the new tendency which he felt to modify those which he entertained respecting both Church and State. His unconscious son at school, nothing doubting or suspecting, repeated his eulogies of Timoleon and the Gracchi, with all a schoolboy's enthusiasm; and the master's mind was not of a pitch to be superior to this unwitting annoyance. It was on these occasions, I suspect, that he crumpled up my themes with a double contempt, and with an equal degree of perplexity.

There was a better school exercise, consisting of an abridgement of some paper in the *Spectator*. We made, however, little of it, and thought it very difficult and perplexing. In fact, it was a hard task for boys, utterly unacquainted with the world, to seize the best points out of the writings of masters in experience. It only gave the *Spectator* an unnatural gravity in our eyes. A common paper for selection, because reckoned one of the easiest, was the one beginning, "I have always preferred cheerfulness to mirth." I had heard this paper so often, and was so tired with it, that it gave me a great inclination to prefer mirth to cheerfulness.

My books were a never-ceasing consolation to me, and such they have ever continued. My favourites, out of school-hours, were Spenser, Collins, Gray, and the *Arabian Nights*. Pope I admired more

than loved; Milton was above me; and the only play of Shakspeare's with which I was conversant was *Hamlet*, of which I had a delighted awe. Neither then, however, nor at any time, have I been as fond of dramatic reading as of any other, though I have written many dramas myself, and have even a special propensity for so doing; a contradiction, for which I have never been able to account. Chaucer, who has since been one of my best friends, I was not acquainted with at school, nor till long afterwards. *Hudibras* I remember reading through at one desperate plunge, while I lay incapable of moving, with two scalded legs. I did it as a sort of achievement, driving on through the verses without understanding a twentieth part of them, but now and then laughing immoderately at the rhymes and similes, and catching a bit of knowledge unawares. I had a schoolfellow of the name of Brooke, afterwards an officer in the East India service, — a grave, quiet boy, with a fund of manliness and good-humour. He would pick out the ludicrous couplets, like plums;—such as those on the astrologer,

> Who deals in destiny's dark counsels,
> And sage opinions of the moon sells;

And on the apothecary's shop—

> With stores of deleterious med'cines,
> Which whosoever took is dead since.

He had the little thick duodecimo edition, with Hogarth's plates,—dirty, and well read, looking like Hudibras himself.

I read through, at the same time, and with little less sense of it as a task, Milton's *Paradise Lost.* The divinity of it was so much "Heathen Greek" to us. Unluckily, I could not taste the beautiful "Heathen Greek" of the style. Milton's heaven made no impression; nor could I enter even into the earthly catastrophe of his man and woman. The only two things I thought of were their happiness in Paradise, where (to me) they eternally remained; and the strange malignity of the devil, who, instead of getting them out of it, as the poet represents, only served to bind them closer. He seemed an odd shade to the picture. The figure he cut in the engravings was more in my thoughts, than anything said of him in the poem. He was a sort of human wild beast, lurking about the garden in which they lived; though, in consequence of the dress given him in some of the plates, this man with a tail occasionally confused himself in my imagination with a Roman general. I could make little of it. I believe, the plates impressed me altogether much more than the poem. Perhaps they were the reason why I thought of Adam and Eve as I did; the pictures of them in their paradisaical state being

more numerous than those in which they appear exiled. Besides, in their exile they were together; and this constituting the best thing in their paradise, I suppose I could not so easily get miserable with them when out of it.

The scald that I speak of, as confining me to bed, was a bad one. I will give an account of it, because it furthers the elucidation of our school manners. I had then become a monitor, or one of the chiefs of a ward; and I was sitting before the fire one evening, after the boys had gone to bed, wrapped up in the perusal of the "Wonderful Magazine," and having in my ear at the same time the bubbling of a great pot, or rather cauldron, of water, containing what was by courtesy called a bread pudding; being neither more nor less than a loaf or two of our bread, which, with a little sugar mashed up with it, was to serve for my supper. And there were eyes, not yet asleep, which would look at it out of their beds, and regard it as a lordly dish. From this dream of bliss I was roused up on the sudden by a great cry, and a horrible agony in my legs. A "boy," as a fag was called, wishing to get something from the other side of the fire-place, and not choosing either to go round behind the table, or to disturb the illustrious legs of the monitor, had endeavoured to get under them or between them, and so pulled

the great handle of the pot after him. It was a frightful sensation. The whole of my being seemed collected in one fiery torment into my legs. Wood, the Grecian (afterwards Fellow of Pembroke, at Cambridge), who was in our ward, and who was always very kind to me (led, I believe, by my inclination for verses, in which he had a great name), came out of his study, and after helping me off with my stockings, which was a horrid operation, the stockings being very coarse, took me in his arms to the sick ward. I shall never forget the enchanting relief occasioned by the cold air, as it blew across the square of the sick ward. I lay there for several weeks, not allowed to move for some time; and caustics became necessary before I got well. The getting well was delicious. I had no tasks—no master; plenty of books to read; and the nurse's daughter (*absit calumnia*) brought me tea and buttered toast, and encouraged me to play the flute. My playing consisted of a few tunes by rote; my fellow-invalids (none of them in very desperate case) would have it rather than no playing at all; so we used to play and tell stories, and go to sleep, thinking of the blessed sick holiday we should have to-morrow, and of the bowl of milk and bread for breakfast, which was alone worth being sick for. The sight of Mr. Long's probe was not so pleasant. We preferred

seeing it in the hands of Mr. Vincent, whose manners, quiet and mild, had double effect on a set of boys more or less jealous of the mixed humbleness and importance of their school. This was most likely the same gentleman of the name of Vincent, who afterwards became distinguished in his profession. He was dark, like a West Indian, and I used to think him handsome. Perhaps the nurse's daughter taught me to think so, for she was a considerable observer.

CHAPTER IV.

SCHOOL-DAYS (*continued.*)

Healthy literary training of Christ-Hospital.—Early friendship.—Early love.—St. James's Park, music, and war.—President West and his house.—The Thornton family and theirs.—The Dayrells and first love.—Early thoughts of Religion.—Jews and their synagogues.—Coleridge and Lamb.—A mysterious schoolfellow.——The greater mystery of the Fazzer.—Mitchell and Barnes.—Boatings, bathings, and Lady Craven.—Departure from school.

I AM grateful to Christ-Hospital for its having bred me up in old cloisters, for its making me acquainted with the languages of Homer and Ovid, and for its having secured to me, on the whole, a well-trained and cheerful boyhood. It pressed no superstition upon me. It did not hinder my growing mind from making what excursions it pleased into the wide and healthy regions of general literature. I might buy as much Collins and Gray as I pleased, and get novels to my heart's content from the circulating libraries. There was nothing prohibited but what would have been prohibited by all good fathers; and everything was encouraged

which would have been encouraged by the Steeles, and Addisons, and Popes; by the Warburtons, and Atterburys, and Hoadleys. Boyer was a severe, nay, a cruel master; but age and reflection have made me sensible that I ought always to add my testimony to his being a laborious, and a conscientious one. When his severity went beyond the mark, I believe he was always sorry for it: sometimes I am sure he was. He once (though the anecdote at first sight may look like a burlesque on the remark) knocked out one of my teeth with the back of a Homer, in a fit of impatience at my stammering. The tooth was a loose one, and I told him as much; but the blood rushed out as I spoke: he turned pale, and, on my proposing to go out and wash the mouth, he said, "Go, child," in a tone of voice amounting to the paternal. Now "go, child," from Boyer, was worth a dozen tender speeches from any one else; and it was felt that I had got an advantage over him, acknowledged by himself.

If I had reaped no other benefit from Christ-Hospital, the school would be ever dear to me from the recollection of the friendships I formed in it, and of the first heavenly taste it gave me of that most spiritual of the affections. I use the word "heavenly" advisedly; and I call friendship the most spiritual of the affections, because even one's

kindred, in partaking of our flesh and blood, become, in a manner, mixed up with our entire being. Not that I would disparage any other form of affection, worshipping, as I do, all forms of it, love in particular, which, in its highest state, is friendship and something more. But if ever I tasted a disembodied transport on earth, it was in those friendships which I entertained at school, before I dreamt of any maturer feeling. I shall never forget the impression it first made on me. I loved my friend for his gentleness, his candour, his truth, his good repute, his freedom even from my own livelier manner, his calm and reasonable kindness. It was not any particular talent that attracted me to him, or anything striking whatsoever. I should say, in one word, it was his goodness. I doubt whether he ever had a conception of a tithe of the regard and respect I entertained for him; and I smile to think of the perplexity (though he never showed it) which he probably felt sometimes at my enthusiastic expressions; for I thought him a kind of angel. It is no exaggeration to say, that, take away the unspiritual part of it, — the genius and the knowledge—and there is no height of conceit indulged in by the most romantic character in Shakspeare, which surpassed what I felt towards the merits I ascribed to him, and the delight which

I took in his society. With the other boys I played antics, and rioted in fantastic jests; but in his society, or whenever I thought of him, I fell into a kind of Sabbath state of bliss; and I am sure I could have died for him.

I experienced this delightful affection towards three successive schoolfellows, till two of them had for some time gone out into the world and forgotten me; but it grew less with each, and in more than one instance, became rivalled by a new set of emotions, especially in regard to the last, for I fell in love with his sister—at least, I thought so. But on the occurrence of her death, not long after, I was startled at finding myself assume an air of greater sorrow than I felt, and at being willing to be relieved by the sight of the first pretty face that turned towards me. I was in the situation of the page in Figaro:—

> Ogni donna cangiar di colore;
> Ogni donna mi fa palpitar.

My friend, who died himself not long after his quitting the University, was of a German family in the service of the court, very refined and musical. I likened them to the people in the novels of Augustus La Fontaine; and with the younger of the two sisters I had a great desire to play the part of the hero in the *Family of Halden.*

The elder, who was my senior, and of manners too advanced for me to aspire to, became distinguished in private circles as an accomplished musician. How I used to rejoice when they struck their "harps in praise of Bragela!" and how ill-bred I must have appeared when I stopped beyond all reasonable time of visiting, unable to tear myself away! They lived in Spring Gardens, in a house which I have often gone out of my way to look at; and, as I first heard of Mozart in their company, and first heard his marches in the Park, I used to associate with their idea whatsoever was charming and graceful.

Maternal notions of war came to nothing before love and music, and the steps of the officers on parade. The young ensign with his flag, and the ladies with their admiration of him, carried everything before them.

I had already borne to school the air of "*Non piu andrai;*" and, with the help of instruments made of paper, into which we breathed what imitations we could of hautboys and clarionets, had inducted the boys into the "pride, pomp, and circumstance" of that glorious bit of war.

Thus is war clothed and recommended to all of us, and not without reason, as long as it is a necessity, or as long as it is something, at least, which we have not acquired knowledge or means enough to

do away with. A bullet is of all pills the one that most requires gilding.

But I will not bring these night-thoughts into the morning of life. Besides, I am anticipating; for this was not my first love. I shall mention that presently.

I have not done with my school-reminiscences; but in order to keep a straightforward course, and notice simultaneous events in their proper places, I shall here speak of the persons and things in which I took the greatest interest when I was not within school-bounds.

The two principal houses at which I visited, till the arrival of our relations from the West Indies, were Mr. West's (late President of the Royal Academy), in Newman-street, and Mr. Godfrey Thornton's (of the distinguished city family), in Austin-Friars. How I loved the Graces in one, and everything in the other! Mr. West (who, as I have already mentioned, had married one of my relations) had bought his house, I believe, not long after he came to England; and he had added a gallery at the back of it, terminating in a couple of lofty rooms. The gallery was a continuation of the house-passage, and, together with one of those rooms and the parlour, formed three sides of a garden, very small but elegant, with a grass-plot in the middle,

and busts upon stands under an arcade. The gallery, as you went up it, formed an angle at a little distance to the left, then another to the right, and then took a longer stretch into the two rooms; and it was hung with the artist's sketches all the way. In a corner between the two angles was a study-door with casts of Venus and Apollo, on each side of it. The two rooms contained the largest of his pictures; and in the farther one, after stepping softly down the gallery, as if reverencing the dumb life on the walls, you generally found the mild and quiet artist at his work; happy, for he thought himself immortal.

I need not enter into the merits of an artist who is so well known, and has been so often criticised. He was a man with regular, mild features; and, though of Quaker origin, had the look of what he was, a painter to a court. His appearance was so gentlemanly, that, the moment he changed his gown for a coat, he seemed to be full-dressed. The simplicity and self-possession of the young Quaker, not having time enough to grow stiff (for he went early to study at Rome), took up, I suppose, with more ease than most would have done, the urbanities of his new position. And what simplicity helped him to, favour would retain. Yet this man, so well bred, and so indisputably clever in his art (whatever might be the amount of his genius), had received so care-

less, or so homely an education when a boy, that he could hardly read. He pronounced also some of his words, in reading, with a puritanical barbarism, such as *haive* for *have*, as some people pronounce when they sing psalms. But this was perhaps an American custom. My mother, who both read and spoke remarkably well, would say *haive*, and *shaul* (for *shall*), when she sung her hymns. But it was not so well in reading lectures at the Academy. Mr. West would talk of his art all day long, painting all the while. On other subjects he was not so fluent; and on political and religious matters he tried hard to maintain the reserve common with those about a court. He succeeded ill in both. There were always strong suspicions of his leaning to his native side in politics; and during Bonaparte's triumph, he could not contain his enthusiasm for the Republican chief, going even to Paris to pay him his homage, when First Consul. The admiration of high colours and powerful effects, natural to a painter, was too strong for him. How he managed this matter with the higher powers in England, I cannot say. Probably he was the less heedful, inasmuch as he was not very carefully paid. I believe he did a great deal for George the Third with little profit. Mr. West certainly kept his love for Bonaparte no secret; and it was no wonder, for the latter expressed admiration

of his pictures. The artist thought the conqueror's smile enchanting, and that he had the handsomest leg he had ever seen. He was present when the "Venus de Medicis" was talked of, the French having just taken possession of her. Bonaparte, Mr. West said, turned round to those about him, and said, with his eyes lit up, "She's coming!" as if he had been talking of a living person. I believe he retained for the Emperor the love that he had had for the First Consul, a wedded love, "for better, for worse." However, I believe also that he retained it after the Emperor's downfal; which is not what every painter did.

But I am getting out of my chronology. The quiet of Mr. West's gallery, the tranquil, intent beauty of the statues, and the subjects of some of the pictures, particularly Death on the Pale Horse, the Deluge, the Scotch King hunting the Stag, Moses on Mount Sinai, Christ Healing the Sick (a sketch), Sir Philip Sidney giving up the Water to the Dying Soldier, the Installation of the Knights of the Garter, and Ophelia before the King and Queen (one of the best things he ever did), made a great impression upon me. My mother and I used to go down the gallery, as if we were treading on wool. She was in the habit of stopping to look at some of the pictures, particularly the Deluge and the Ophelia,

with a countenance quite awe-stricken. She used also to point out to me the subjects relating to liberty and patriotism, and the domestic affections. Agrippina bringing home the ashes of Germanicus was a great favourite with her. I remember, too, the awful delight afforded us by the Angel slaying the army of Sennacherib; a bright figure lording it in the air, with a chaos of human beings below.

As Mr. West was almost sure to be found at work, in the farthest room, habited in his white woollen gown, so you might have predicated, with equal certainty, that Mrs. West was sitting in the parlour, reading. I used to think, that if I had such a parlour to sit in, I should do just as she did. It was a good-sized room, with two windows looking out on the little garden I spoke of, and opening to it from one of them by a flight of steps. The garden, with its busts in it, and the pictures which you knew were on the other side of its wall, had an Italian look. The room was hung with engravings and coloured prints. Among them was the Lion Hunt, from Rubens; the Hierarchy with the Godhead, from Raphael, which I hardly thought it right to look at; and two screens by the fireside, containing prints (from Angelica Kauffman, I think, but I am not sure that Mr. West himself was not the designer) of the Loves of Angelica and Medoro, which I could

have looked at from morning to night. Angelica's intent eyes, I thought, had the best of it; but I thought so without knowing why. This gave me a love for Ariosto before I knew him. I got Hoole's translation, but could make nothing of it. Angelica Kauffman seemed to me to have done much more for her namesake. She could see farther into a pair of eyes than Mr. Hoole with his spectacles. This reminds me that I could make as little of Pope's Homer, which a schoolfellow of mine was always reading, and which I was ashamed of not being able to like. It was not that I did not admire Pope; but the words in his translation always took precedence in my mind of the things, and the unvarying sweetness of his versification tired me before I knew the reason. This did not hinder me afterwards from trying to imitate it; nor from succeeding; that is to say, as far as everybody else succeeds, and writing smooth verses. It is Pope's wit and closeness that are the difficult things, and that make him what he is; a truism, which the mistakes of critics on divers sides have made it but too warrantable to repeat.

Mrs. West and my mother used to talk of old times, and Philadelphia, and my father's prospects at court. I sat apart with a book, from which I stole glances at Angelica. I had a habit at that time of holding my breath, which forced me every now and then

to take long sighs. My aunt would offer me a bribe not to sigh. I would earn it once or twice; but the sighs were sure to return. These wagers I did not care for; but I remember being greatly mortified when Mr. West offered me half-a-crown if I would solve the old question of "Who was the father of Zebedee's children?" and I could not tell him. He never made his appearance till dinner, and returned to his painting-room directly after it. And so at tea-time. The talk was very quiet; the neighbourhood quiet; the servants quiet; I thought the very squirrel in the cage would have made a greater noise anywhere else. James the porter, a fine tall fellow, who figured in his master's pictures as an apostle, was as quiet as he was strong. Standing for his picture had become a sort of religion with him. Even the butler, with his little twinkling eyes, full of pleasant conceit, vented his notions of himself in half tones and whispers. This was a strange fantastic person. He got my brother Robert to take a likeness of him, small enough to be contained in a shirt pin. It was thought that his twinkling eyes, albeit not young, had some fair cynosure in the neighbourhood. What was my brother's amazement, when, the next time he saw him, the butler said, with a face of enchanted satisfaction, "Well, sir, you see!" making a movement at the same time

with the frill at his waistcoat. The miniature that was to be given to the object of his affections, had been given accordingly. It was in his own bosom.

But, notwithstanding my delight with the house at the west end of the town, it was not to compare with my beloved one in the city. There was quiet in the one; there were beautiful statues and pictures; and there was my Angelica for me, with her intent eyes, at the fireside. But, besides quiet in the other, there was cordiality, and there was music, and a family brimful of hospitality and good-nature, and dear Almeria T. (now Mrs. P——e), who in vain pretends that she has become aged, which is what she never did, shall, would, might, should, or could do. Those were indeed holidays, on which I used to go to Austin-Friars. The house (such, at least, are my boyish recollections) was of the description I have been ever fondest of, — large, rambling, old-fashioned, solidly built, resembling the mansions about Highgate and other old villages.

It was furnished as became the house of a rich merchant and a sensible man, the comfort predominating over the costliness. At the back was a garden with a lawn; and a private door opened into another garden, belonging to the Company of Drapers; so that, what with the secluded nature of the street itself, and these verdant places behind it, it

was truly *rus in urbe*, and a retreat. When I turned down the archway, I held my mother's hand tighter with pleasure, and was full of expectation, and joy, and respect. My first delight was in mounting the staircase to the rooms of the young ladies, setting my eyes on the comely and bright countenance of my fair friend, with her romantic name, and turning over for the hundredth time, the books in her library. What she did with the volumes of the *Turkish Spy*, what they meant, or what amusement she could extract from them, was an eternal mystification to me. Not long ago, meeting with a copy of the book accidentally, I pounced upon my old acquaintance, and found him to contain better and more amusing stuff than people would suspect from his dry look and his obsolete politics.*

The face of tenderness and respect with which Almeria used to welcome my mother, springing forward with her fine buxom figure to supply the strength which the other wanted, and showing what an equality of love there may be between youth and

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* The *Turkish Spy* is a sort of philosophical newspaper, in volumes; and, under a mask of bigotry, speculates very freely on all subjects. It is said to have been written by an Italian Jesuit of the name of Marana. The first volume has been attributed, however, to Sir Roger Manley, father of the author of the *Atalantis;* and the rest to Dr. Midgeley, a friend of his.

middle-age, and rich and poor, I should never cease to love her for, had she not been, as she was, one of the best-natured persons in the world in everything. I have not seen her now for a great many years; but, with that same face, whatever change she may pretend to find in it, she will go to heaven; for it is the face of her spirit. A good heart never grows old.

Of George T——, her brother, who will pardon this omission of his worldly titles, whatever they may be, I have a similar kind of recollection, in its proportion; for, though we knew him thoroughly, we saw him less. The sight of his face was an additional sunshine to my holiday. He was very generous and handsome-minded; a genuine human being.

Mrs. T——, the mother, a very lady-like woman, in a delicate state of health, we usually found reclining on a sofa, always ailing, but always with a smile for us. The father, a man of a large habit of body, panting with asthma, whom we seldom saw but at dinner, treated us with all the family delicacy, and would have me come and sit next him, which I did with a mixture of joy and dread; for it was painful to hear him breathe. I dwell the more upon these attentions, because the school that I was in held a sort of equivocal rank in point of what is

called respectability; and it was no less an honour to another, than to ourselves, to know when to place us upon a liberal footing. Young as I was, I felt this point strongly; and was touched with as grateful a tenderness towards those who treated me handsomely, as I retreated inwardly upon a proud consciousness of my Greek and Latin, when the supercilious would have humbled me. Blessed house! May a blessing be upon your rooms, and your lawn, and your neighbouring garden, and the quiet old monastic name of your street! and may it never be a thoroughfare! and may all your inmates be happy! Would to God one could renew, at a moment's notice, the happy hours we have enjoyed in past times, with the same circles, and in the same houses! A planet with such a privilege would be a great lift nearer heaven. What prodigious evenings, reader, we would have of it! What fine pieces of childhood, of youth, of manhood —ay, and of age, as long as our friends lasted!

The old gentleman in Gil Blas, who complained that the peaches were not so fine as they used to be when he was young, had more reason than appears on the face of it. He missed not only his former palate, but the places he ate them in, and those who ate them with him. I have been told, that the cranberries I have met with since must have been as

fine as those I got with the T.'s; as large and as juicy; and that they came from the same place. For all that, I never ate a cranberry-tart since I dined in Austin-Friars.

I should have fallen in love with A. T——, had I been old enough. As it was, my first flame, or my first notion of a flame, which is the same thing in those days, was for my giddy cousin Fanny Dayrell, a charming West Indian. Her mother, the aunt I spoke of, had just come from Barbadoes with her two daughters and a sister. She was a woman of a princely spirit; and having a good property, and every wish to make her relations more comfortable, she did so. It became holiday with us all. My mother raised her head; my father grew young again; my cousin Kate (Christiana rather, for her name was not Catherine; Christiana Arabella was her name) conceived a regard for one of my brothers, and married him; and for my part, besides my pictures and Italian garden at Mr. West's, and my beloved old English house in Austin-Friars, I had now another paradise in Great Ormond-street.

My aunt had something of the West Indian pride, but all in a good spirit, and was a mighty cultivator of the gentilities, inward as well as outward. I did not dare to appear before her with dirty hands, she would have rebuked me so handsomely. For some

reason or other, the marriage of my brother and his cousin was kept secret a little while. I became acquainted with it by chance, coming in upon a holiday, the day the ceremony took place. Instead of keeping me out of the secret by a trick, they very wisely resolved upon trusting me with it, and relying upon my honour. My honour happened to be put to the test, and I came off with flying colours. It is to this circumstance I trace the religious idea I have ever since entertained of keeping a secret. I went with the bride and bridegroom to church, and remember kneeling apart and weeping bitterly. My tears were unaccountable to me then. Doubtless they were owing to an instinctive sense of the great change that was taking place in the lives of two human beings, and of the unalterableness of the engagement. Death and Life seem to come together on these occasions, like awful guests at a feast, and look one another in the face.

It was not with such good effect that my aunt raised my notions of a schoolboy's pocket-money to half-crowns, and crowns, and half-guineas. My father and mother were both as generous as daylight; but they could not give what they had not. I had been unused to spending, and accordingly I spent with a vengeance. I remember a ludicrous instance. The first half-guinea that I received

brought about me a consultation of companions to know how to get rid of it. One shilling was devoted to pears, another to apples, another to cakes, and so on, all to be bought immediately, as they were; till coming to the sixpence, and being struck with a recollection that I ought to do something useful with that, I bought sixpenn'orth of shoestrings: these, no doubt, vanished like the rest. The next half-guinea came to the knowledge of the master: he interfered, which was one of his proper actions; and my aunt practised more self-denial in future.

Our new family from abroad were true West Indians, or, as they would have phrased it, "true Barbadians born." They were generous, warm-tempered, had great good-nature; were proud, but not unpleasantly so; lively, yet indolent; temperately epicurean in their diet; fond of company, and dancing, and music; and lovers of show, but far from withholding the substance. I speak chiefly of the mother and daughters. My other aunt, an elderly maiden, who piqued herself on the delicacy of her hands and ankles, and made you understand how many suitors she had refused (for which she expressed anything but repentance, being extremely vexed), was not deficient in complexional good-nature; but she was narrow-minded, and seemed to

care for nothing in the world but two things: first, for her elder niece Kate, whom she had helped to nurse; and second, for a becoming set-out of coffee and buttered toast, particularly of a morning, when it was taken up to her in bed, with a suitable equipage of silver and other necessaries of life. Yes; there was one more indispensable thing—slavery. It was frightful to hear her small mouth and little mincing tones assert the necessity not only of slaves, but of robust corporeal punishment to keep them to their duty. But she did this, because her want of ideas could do no otherwise. Having had slaves, she wondered how anybody could object to so natural and lady-like an establishment. Late in life, she took to fancying that every polite old gentleman was in love with her; and thus she lived on, till her dying moment, in a flutter of expectation.

The black servant must have puzzled this aunt of mine sometimes. All the wonder of which she was capable, he certainly must have roused, not without a "quaver of consternation." This man had come over with them from the West Indies. He was a slave on my aunt's estate, and as such he demeaned himself, till he learned that there was no such thing as a slave in England; that the moment a man set his foot on English ground, he was free. I cannot help

smiling to think of the bewildered astonishment into which his first overt act, in consequence of this knowledge, must have put my poor aunt Courthope (for that was her Christian name). Most likely it broke out in the shape of some remonstrance about his fellow-servants. He partook of the pride common to all the Barbadians, black as well as white; and the maid-servants tormented him. I remember his coming up in the parlour one day, and making a ludicrous representation of the affronts put upon his office and person, interspersing his chattering and gesticulations with explanatory dumb show. One of them was a pretty girl, who had manœuvred till she got him stuck in a corner; and he insisted upon telling us all that she said and did. His respect for himself had naturally increased since he became free; but he did not know what to do with it. Poor Samuel was not ungenerous, after his fashion. He also wished, with his freedom, to acquire a freeman's knowledge, but stuck fast at pothooks and hangers. To frame a written B he pronounced a thing impossible. Of his powers on the violin he made us more sensible, not without frequent remonstrances, which it must have taken all my aunt's goodnature to make her repeat. He had left two wives in Barbadoes, one of whom was brought to bed of a son a little after he came away. For this son he wanted a name,

that was new, sounding, and long. They referred him to the reader of Homer and Virgil. With classical names he was well acquainted, Mars and Venus being among his most intimate friends, besides Jupiters and Adonises, and Dianas with large families. At length we succeeded with Neoptolemus. He said he had never heard it before; and he made me write it for him in a great text hand, that there might be no mistake.

My aunt took a country-house at Merton, in Surrey, where I passed three of the happiest weeks of my life. It was the custom at our school, in those days, to allow us only one set of unbroken holidays during the whole time we were there,—I mean, holidays in which we remained away from school by night as well as by day. The period was always in August. Imagine a schoolboy passionately fond of the green fields, who had never slept out of the heart of the city for years. It was a compensation even for the pang of leaving my friend; and then what letters I would write to him. And what letters I did write! What full measure of affection pressed down, and running over! I read, walked, had a garden and orchard to run in; and fields that I could have rolled in, to have my will of them.

My father accompanied me to Wimbledon to see Horne Tooke, who patted me on the head. I felt

very differently under his hand, and under that of the bishop of London, when he confirmed a crowd of us in St. Paul's. Not that I thought of politics, though I had a sense of his being a patriot; but patriotism, as well as everything else, was connected in my mind with something classical, and Horne Tooke held his political reputation with me by the same tenure that he held his fame for learning and grammatical knowledge. "The learned Horne Tooke" was the designation by which I styled him in some verses I wrote; in which verses, by the way, with a poetical license which would have been thought more classical by Queen Elizabeth than my master, I called my aunt a "nymph." In the ceremony of confirmation by the bishop, there was something too official, and like a despatch of business, to excite my veneration. My head only anticipated the coming of his hand, with a thrill in the scalp: and when it came, it tickled me.

My cousins had the celebrated Dr. Calcott for a music-master. The doctor, who was a scholar and a great reader, was so pleased with me one day for being able to translate the beginning of Xenophon's Anabasis (one of our schoolbooks), that he took me out with him to Nunn's the bookseller's in Great Queen-street, and made me a present of "Schrevelius's Lexicon." When he came down to Merton,

he let me ride his horse. What days were those! Instead of being roused against my will by a bell, I jumped up with the lark, and strolled "out of bounds." Instead of bread and water for breakfast, I had coffee and tea, and buttered toast: for dinner, not a hunk of bread and a modicum of hard meat, or a bowl of pretended broth; but fish, and fowl, and noble hot joints, and puddings, and sweets, and Guava jellies, and other West Indian mysteries of peppers and preserves, and wine: and then I had tea; and I sat up to supper like a man, and lived so well, that I might have been very ill, had I not run about all the rest of the day.

My strolls about the fields with a book were full of happiness: only my dress used to get me stared at by the villagers. Walking one day by the little river Wandle, I came upon one of the loveliest girls I ever beheld, standing in the water with bare legs, washing some linen. She turned as she was stooping, and showed a blooming oval face with blue eyes, on either side of which flowed a profusion of flaxen locks. With the exception of the colour of the hair, it was like Raphael's own head turned into a peasant girl's. The eyes were full of gentle astonishment at the sight of me; and mine must have wondered no less. However, I was prepared for such wonders. It was only one of my poetical visions realized, and

I expected to find the world full of them. What she thought of my blue skirts and yellow stockings, is not so clear. She did not, however, taunt me with my "petticoats," as the girls in the streets of London would do, making me blush, as I thought they ought to have done instead. My beauty in the brook was too gentle and diffident; at least I thought so, and my own heart did not contradict me. I then took every beauty for an Arcadian, and every brook for a fairy stream; and the reader would be surprised, if he knew to what an extent I have a similar tendency still. I find the same possibilities by another path.

I do not remember whether an Abbé Paris, who taught my cousins French, used to see them in the country; but I never shall forget him in Ormond-street. He was an emigrant, very gentlemanly, with a face of remarkable benignity, and a voice that became it. He spoke English in a slow manner, that was very graceful. I shall never forget his saying one day, in answer to somebody who pressed him on the subject, and in the mildest of tones, that without doubt it was impossible to be saved out of the pale of the Catholic Church.

One contrast of this sort reminds me of another. My aunt Courthope had something growing out on one of her knuckles, which she was afraid to let a surgeon look at. There was a Dr. Chapman, a West

Indian physician, who came to see us, a person of great suavity of manners, with all that air of languor and want of energy which the West Indians often exhibit. He was in the habit of inquiring, with the softest voice in the world, how my aunt's hand was; and coming one day upon us in the midst of dinner, and sighing forth his usual question, she gave it him over her shoulder to look at. In a moment she shrieked, and the swelling was gone. The meekest of doctors had done it away with his lancet.

I had no drawback on my felicity at Merton, with the exception of an occasional pang at my friend's absence, and a new vexation that surprised and mortified me. I had been accustomed at school to sleep with sixty boys in the room, and some old night-fears that used to haunt me were forgotten. No Mantichoras there!—no old men crawling on the floor! What was my chagrin, when on sleeping alone, after so long a period, I found my terrors come back again!—not, indeed, in all the same shapes. Beasts could frighten me no longer; but I was at the mercy of any other ghastly fiction that presented itself to my mind, crawling or ramping. I struggled hard to say nothing about it; but my days began to be discoloured with fears of my nights; and with unutterable humiliation I begged that the footman might be allowed to sleep in the same room. Luckily, my

request was attended to in the kindest and most reconciling manner. I was pitied for my fears, but praised for my candour—a balance of qualities which, I have reason to believe, did me a service far beyond that of the moment. Samuel, who, fortunately for my shame, had a great respect for fear of this kind, had his bed removed accordingly into my room. He used to entertain me at night with stories of Barbadoes and the negroes; and in a few days I was reassured and happy.

It was then (oh, shame that I must speak of fair lady after confessing a heart so faint!)—it was then that I fell in love with my cousin Fan. However, I would have fought all her young acquaintances round for her, timid as I was, and little inclined to pugnacity.

Fanny was a lass of fifteen, with little laughing eyes, and a mouth like a plum. I was then (I feel as if I ought to be ashamed to say it) not more than thirteen, if so old; but I had read Tooke's Pantheon, and came of a precocious race. My cousin came of one too, and was about to be married to a handsome young fellow of three-and-twenty. I thought nothing of this, for nothing could be more innocent than my intentions. I was not old enough, or grudging enough, or whatever it was, even to be jealous. I thought everybody must love Fanny Dayrell; and

if she did not leave me out in permitting it, I was satisfied. It was enough for me to be with her as long as I could; to gaze on her with delight, as she floated hither and thither; and to sit on the stiles in the neighbouring fields, thinking of Tooke's Pantheon. My friendship was greater than my love. Had my favourite schoolfellow been ill, or otherwise demanded my return, I should certainly have chosen his society in preference. Three-fourths of my heart were devoted to friendship; the rest was in a vague dream of beauty, and female cousins, and nymphs, and green fields, and a feeling which, though of a warm nature, was full of fear and respect.

Had the jade put me on the least equality of footing as to age, I know not what change might have been wrought in me; but though too young herself for the serious duties she was about to bring on her, and full of sufficient levity and gaiety not to be uninterested with the little black-eyed schoolboy that lingered about her, my vanity was well paid off by hers, for she kept me at a distance by calling me *petit garçon*. This was no better than the assumption of an elder sister in her teens over a younger one; but the latter feels it, nevertheless; and I persuaded myself that it was particularly cruel. I wished the Abbé Paris at Jamaica with his French. There would she come in her frock and tucker (for she had not yet left off

either), her curls dancing, and her hands clasped together in the enthusiasm of something to tell me, and when I flew to meet her, forgetting the difference of ages, and alive only to my charming cousin, she would repress me with a little fillip on the cheek, and say, "Well, *petit garçon*, what do you think of that?" The worst of it was, that this odious French phrase sat insufferably well upon her plump little mouth. She and I used to gather peaches before the house were up. I held the ladder for her; she mounted like a fairy; and when I stood doating on her, as she looked down and threw the fruit in my lap, she would cry, "*Petit garçon*, you will let 'em all drop!" On my return to school, she gave me a locket for a keepsake, in the shape of a heart; which was the worst thing she ever did to the *petit garçon*, for it touched me on my weak side, and looked like a sentiment. I believe I should have had serious thoughts of becoming melancholy, had I not, in returning to school, returned to my friend, and so found means to occupy my craving for sympathy. However, I wore the heart a long while. I have sometimes thought there was more in her French than I imagined; but I believe not. She naturally took herself for double my age, with a lover of three-and-twenty. Soon after her marriage, fortune separated us for many years. My passion had almost as

soon died away; but I have loved the name of Fanny ever since; and when I met her again, which was under circumstances of trouble on her part, I could not see her without such an emotion as I was fain to confess to a person "near and dear," who forgave me for it; which made me love the forgiver the more. Yes! the "black ox" trod on the fairy foot of my light-hearted cousin Fan; of her, whom I could no more have thought of in conjunction with sorrow, than of a ball-room with a tragedy. To know that she was rich and admired, and abounding in mirth and music, was to me the same thing as to know that she existed. How often did I afterwards wish myself rich in turn, that I might have restored to her all the graces of life! She was generous, and would not have denied me the satisfaction.

This was my first love. That for a friend's sister was my second, and not so strong; for it was divided with the admiration of which I have spoken for the Park music and "the soldiers." Nor had the old tendency to mix up the clerical with the military service been forgotten. Indeed, I have never been without a clerical tendency; nor, after what I have written for the genial edification of my fellow-creatures, and the extension of charitable and happy thoughts in matters of religion, would I be thought to speak of it without even a certain gravity, not

compromised or turned into levity, in my opinion, by any cheerfulness of tone with which it may happen to be associated; for Heaven has made smiles as well as tears: has made laughter itself, and mirth; and to appreciate its gifts thoroughly is to treat none of them with disrespect, or to affect to be above them. The wholly gay, and the wholly grave spirit is equally but half the spirit of a right human creature.

I mooted points of faith with myself very early, in consequence of what I heard at home. The very inconsistencies which I observed round about me in matters of belief and practice, did but the more make me wish to discover in what the right spirit of religion consisted: while, at the same time, nobody felt more instinctively than myself, that forms were necessary to preserve essence. I had the greatest respect for them, wherever I thought them sincere. I got up imitations of religious processions in the school-room, and persuaded my coadjutors to learn even a psalm in the original Hebrew, in order to sing it as part of the ceremony. To make the lesson as easy as possible, it was the shortest of all the psalms, the hundred and seventeenth, which consists but of two verses. A Jew, I am afraid, would have been puzzled to recognise it; though, perhaps, I got the tone from his own

synagogue; for I was well acquainted with that place of worship. I was led to dislike Catholic chapels, in spite of their music and their paintings, by what I had read of Inquisitions, and by the impiety which I found in the doctrine of eternal punishment,—a monstrosity which I never associated with the Church of England, at least not habitually. But identifying no such dogmas with the Jews, who are indeed free from them (though I was not aware of that circumstance at the time), and reverencing them for their ancient connexion with the Bible, I used to go with some of my companions to the synagogue in Duke's Place; where I took pleasure in witnessing the semi-catholic pomp of their service, and in hearing their fine singing; not without something of a constant astonishment at their wearing their hats. This custom, however, kindly mixed itself up with the recollection of my cocked hat and band. I was not aware that it originated in the immoveable eastern turban.

These visits to the synagogue did me, I conceive, a great deal of good. They served to universalize my notions of religion, and to keep them unbigoted. It never became necessary to remind me that Jesus was himself a Jew. I have also retained through life a respectful notion of the Jews as a body.

There were some school rhymes about "pork

upon a fork," and the Jews going to prison. At Easter, a strip of bordered paper was stuck on the breast of every boy, containing the words "He is risen." It did not give us the slightest thought of what it recorded. It only reminded us of an old rhyme, which some of the boys used to go about the school repeating:—

He is risen, he is risen,
All the Jews must go to prison.

A beautiful Christian deduction! Thus has charity itself been converted into a spirit of antagonism; and thus it is that the antagonism, in the progress of knowledge, becomes first a pastime and then a jest.

I never forgot the Jews' synagogue, their music, their tabernacle, and the courtesy with which strangers were allowed to see it. I had the pleasure, before I left school, of becoming acquainted with some members of their community, who were extremely liberal towards other opinions, and who, nevertheless, entertained a sense of the Supreme Being far more reverential than I had observed in any Christian, my mother excepted. My feelings towards them received additional encouragement from the respect shown to their history in the paintings of Mr. West, who was anything but a bigot himself, and who often had Jews to sit to him.

I contemplated Moses and Aaron, and the young Levites, by the sweet light of his picture-rooms, where everybody trod about in stillness, as though it was a kind of holy ground; and if I met a Rabbi in the street, he seemed to me a man coming, not from Bishopsgate or Saffron Hill, but out of the remoteness of time.

I have spoken of the distinguished individuals bred at Christ-Hospital, including Coleridge and Lamb, who left the school not long before I entered it. Coleridge I never saw till he was old. Lamb I recollect coming to see the boys, with a pensive, brown, handsome, and kindly face, and a gait advancing with a motion from side to side, between involuntary consciousness and attempted ease. His brown complexion may have been owing to a visit in the country; his air of uneasiness to a great burden of sorrow. He dressed with a quaker-like plainness. I did not know him as Lamb: I took him for a Mr. "Guy," having heard somebody address him by that appellative, I suppose in jest.

The boy whom I have designated in these notices as C——n, and whose intellect in riper years became clouded, had a more than usual look of being the son of old parents. He had a reputation among us, which, in more superstitious times, might have rendered him an object of dread. We thought he

knew a good deal out of the pale of ordinary inquiries. He studied the weather and the stars, things which boys rarely trouble their heads with; and as I had an awe of thunder, which always brought a reverential shade on my mother's face, as if God had been speaking, I used to send to him on close summer days, to know if thunder was to be expected.

In connection with this mysterious schoolfellow, though he was the last person, in some respects, to be associated with him, I must mention a strange epidemic fear which occasionally prevailed among the boys, respecting a personage whom they called the Fazzer.

The Fazzer was known to be nothing more than one of the boys themselves. In fact, he consisted of one of the most impudent of the bigger ones; but as it was his custom to disguise his face, and as this aggravated the terror which made the little boys hide their own faces, his participation of our common human nature only increased the supernatural fearfulness of his pretensions. His office as Fazzer consisted in being audacious, unknown, and frightening the boys at night; sometimes by pulling them out of their beds; sometimes by simply *fazzing* their hair ("fazzing" meant pulling or vexing, like a goblin); sometimes (which was horriblest of all) by quietly

giving us to understand, in some way or other, that the "Fazzer was out," that is to say, out of his own bed, and then being seen (by those who dared to look) sitting, or otherwise making his appearance, in his white shirt, motionless and dumb. It was a very good horror, of its kind. The Fazzer was our Dr. Faustus, our elf, our spectre, our Flibbertigibbet, who "put knives in our pillows and halters in our pews." He was Jones, it is true, or Smith; but he was also somebody else—an anomaly, a duality, Smith and sorcery united. My friend Charles Ollier should have written a book about him. He was our Old Man of the Mountain, and yet a common boy.

One night I thought I saw this phenomenon under circumstances more than usually unearthly. It was a fine moonlight night; I was then in a ward the casements of which looked (as they still look) on the churchyard. My bed was under the second window from the east, not far from the statue of Edward the Sixth. Happening to wake in the middle of the night, and cast up my eyes, I saw, on a bed's head near me, and in one of these casements, a figure in its shirt, which I took for the Fazzer. The room was silent; the figure motionless; I fancied that half the boys in the ward were glancing at it, without daring to speak. It was poor

C——n, gazing at that lunar orb, which might afterwards be supposed to have malignantly fascinated him.

Contemporary with C——n was Wood, before mentioned, whom I admired for his verses, and who was afterwards Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, where I visited him, and found him, to my astonishment, a head shorter than myself. Every upper boy at school appears a giant to a little one. "Big boy" and senior are synonymous. Now and then, however, extreme smallness in a senior scholar gives a new kind of dignity, by reason of the testimony it bears to the ascendancy of the intellect. It was the custom for the monitors at Christ-Hospital, during prayers before meat, to stand fronting the tenants of their respective wards, while the objects of their attention were kneeling. Looking up, on one of these occasions, towards a new monitor who was thus standing, and whose face was unknown to me (for there were six hundred of us, and his ward was not mine), I thought him the smallest boy that could ever have attained to so distinguished an eminence. He was little in person, little in face, and he had a singularly juvenile cast of features, even for one so *petite*.

It was Mitchell, the translator of Aristophanes. He had really attained his position prematurely. I rose afterwards to be next to him in the school;

and from a grudge that existed between us, owing probably to a reserve, which I thought pride, on his part, and to an ardency which he may have considered frivolous on mine, we became friends. Circumstances parted us in after life: I became a Reformist, and he a Quarterly Reviewer; but he sent me kindly remembrances not long before he died. I did not know he was declining; and it will ever be a pain to me to reflect, that delay conspired with accident to hinder my sense of it from being known to him; especially as I learned that he had not been so prosperous as I supposed. He had his weaknesses as well as myself, but they were mixed with conscientious and noble qualities. Zealous as he was for aristocratical government, he was no indiscriminate admirer of persons in high places; and, though it would have bettered his views in life, he had declined taking orders, from nicety of religious scruple. Of his admirable scholarship I need say nothing.

Equally good scholar, but of a less zealous temperament, was Barnes, who stood next me on the Deputy-Grecian form, and who was afterwards identified with the sudden and striking increase of the *Times* newspaper in fame and influence. He was very handsome when young, with a profile of Grecian regularity; and was famous among us

for a certain dispassionate humour, for his admiration of the works of Fielding, and for his delight, nevertheless, in pushing a narrative to its utmost, and drawing upon his stores of fancy for intensifying it; an amusement for which he possessed an understood privilege. It was painful in after-life to see his good looks swallowed up in corpulency, and his once handsome mouth thrusting its under lip out, and panting with asthma. I believe he was originally so well constituted, in point of health and bodily feeling, that he fancied he could go on all his life without taking any of the usual methods to preserve his comfort. The editorship of the *Times*, which turned his night into day, and would have been a trying burden to any man, completed the bad consequences of his negligence; and he died painfully before he was old. Barnes wrote elegant Latin verse, a classical English style, and might assuredly have made himself a name in wit and literature, had he cared much for anything beyond his glass of wine and his Fielding.

What pleasant days have I not passed with him, and other schoolfellows, bathing in the New River, and boating on the Thames. He and I began to learn Italian together; and anybody not within the pale of the enthusiastic, might have thought us mad, as we went shouting the beginning of Metastasio's ode to

Venus, as loud as we could bawl, over the Hornsey-fields. I can repeat it to this day, from those first lessons.

Scendi propizia
Col tuo splendore,
O bella Venere,
Madre d'Amore;
Madre d'Amore,
Che sola sei
Piacer degli uomini,
E degli dei.*

On the same principle of making invocations as loud as possible, and at the same time of fulfilling the prophecy of a poet, and also for the purpose of indulging ourselves with an echo, we used to lie upon our oars at Richmond, and call, in the most vociferous manner, upon the spirit of Thomson to "rest."

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore,
When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing oar
To bid his gentle spirit rest.

Collins's Ode on the Death of Thomson.

It was more like "perturbing" his spirit than laying it.

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* "Descend propitious with thy brightness, O beautiful Venus, Mother of Love;—Mother of Love, who alone art the pleasure of men and of gods."

One day Barnes fell overboard, and, on getting into the boat again, he drew a little edition of Seneca out of his pocket, which seemed to have become fat with the water. It was like an extempore dropsy.

Another time, several of us being tempted to bathe on a very hot day, near Hammersmith, and not exercising sufficient patience in selecting our spot, we were astonished at receiving a sudden lecture from a lady. She was in a hat and feathers, and riding-habit; and as the grounds turned out to belong to the Margravine of Anspach (Lady Craven), we persuaded ourselves that our admonitrix, who spoke in no measured terms, was her Serene Highness herself. The obvious reply to her was, that if it was indiscreet in us not to have chosen a more sequestered spot, it was not excessively the reverse in a lady to come and rebuke us. I related this story to my acquaintance, Sir Robert Ker Porter, who knew her. His observation was, that nothing wonderful was to be wondered at in the Margravine.

I was fifteen when I put off my band and blue skirts for a coat and neckcloth. I was then first Deputy-Grecian, and I had the honour of going out of the school in the same rank, at the same age, and for the same reason, as my friend Charles Lamb.

The reason was that I hesitated in my speech. I did not stammer half so badly as I used; and it is very seldom that I halt at a syllable now; but it was understood that a Grecian was bound to deliver a public speech before he left school, and to go into the church afterwards; and as I could do neither of these things, a Grecian I could not be. So I put on my coat and waistcoat, and, what was stranger, my hat; a very uncomfortable addition to my sensations. For eight years I had gone bareheaded; save now and then, a few inches of pericranium, when the little cap, no larger than a crumpet, was stuck on one side, to the mystification of the old ladies in the streets.

I then cared as little for the rains as I did for anything else. I had now a vague sense of worldly trouble, and of a great and serious change in my condition; besides which, I had to quit my old cloisters, and my playmates, and long habits of all sorts; so that, what was a very happy moment to schoolboys in general, was to me one of the most painful of my life. I surprised my schoolfellows and the master with the melancholy of my tears. I took leave of my books, of my friends, of my seat in the grammar-school, of my good-hearted nurse and her daughter, of my bed, of the cloisters, and of the very pump out of which I had taken so many delicious

draughts, as if I should never see them again, though I meant to come every day. The fatal hat was put on; my father was come to fetch me.

> We, hand in hand, with strange new steps and slow,
> Through Holborn took our meditative way.

CHAPTER V.

YOUTH.

Juvenile verses. — Visits to Cambridge and Oxford. — Danger of drowning.—Bobart, the Oxford coachman.—Spirit of University training.—Dr. Raine, of the Charter-House.—A juvenile beard. —America and Dr. Franklin.—Maurice, author of Indian antiquities. — Welch bards. — A religious hoy. — Doctrine of self-preservation.—A walk from Ramsgate to Brighton.—Character of a liver at inns.—A devout landlord.—Inhospitality to the benighted.— Answers of rustics to wayfarers. — Pedestrian exploits.—Dangers of delay.—The club of elders.

For some time after I left school, I did nothing but visit my schoolfellows, haunt the book-stalls, and write verses. My father collected the verses; and published them with a large list of subscribers, numbers of whom belonged to his old congregations. I was as proud perhaps of the book at that time, as I am ashamed of it now. The French Revolution, though the worst portion of it was over, had not yet shaken up and re-invigorated the sources of thought all over Europe. At least I was not old enough, perhaps was not able, to get out of the trammels of the regular imitative poetry, or versification rather,

which was taught in the schools. My book was a heap of imitations, all but absolutely worthless. But absurd as it was, it did me a serious mischief; for it made me suppose that I had attained an end, instead of not having reached even a commencement; and thus caused me to waste in imitation a good many years which I ought to have devoted to the study of the poetical art, and of nature. Coleridge has praised Boyer for teaching us to laugh at "muses," and "Castalian streams;" but he ought rather to have lamented that he did not teach us how to love them wisely, as he might have done had he really known anything about poetry, or loved Spenser and the old poets, as he thought he admired the new. Even Coleridge's juvenile poems were none the better for Boyer's training. As to mine, they were for the most part as mere trash as anti-Castalian heart could have desired. I wrote "odes" because Collins and Gray had written them, "pastorals" because Pope had written them, "blank verse" because Akenside and Thomson had written blank verse, and a "Palace of Pleasure" because Spenser had written a "Bower of Bliss." But in all these authors I saw little but their words, and imitated even those badly. I had nobody to bid me to go to the nature which had originated the books. Coleridge's lauded teacher put into my hands, at one time, the life of

Pope by Ruffhead (the worst he could have chosen), and at another (for the express purpose of cultivating my love of poetry) the *Irene* and other poems of Dr. Johnson! Pope's smooth but unartistical versification spell-bound me for a long time. Of Johnson's poem I retained nothing but the epigram beginning "Hermit hoar—"

"Hermit hoar, in solemn cell,
Wearing out life's evening gray,
Strike thy bosom, sage, and tell
What is bliss, and which the way.

Thus I spoke, and speaking, sighed,
Scarce repressed the starting tear,
When the hoary sage replied,
Come, my lad, and drink some beer."

This was the first epigram of the kind which I had seen; and it had a cautionary effect upon me to an extent which its author might hardly have desired. The grave Dr. Johnson and the rogue Ambrose de Lamela, in *Gil Blas*, stood side by side in my imagination as unmaskers of venerable appearances.

Not long after the publication of my book, I visited two of my schoolfellows, who had gone to Cambridge and Oxford. The repute of it, unfortunately, accompanied me, and gave a foolish increase to my self-complacency. At Oxford, I was introduced to Kett, the poetry professor,—a good-natured man, with a face like a Houhynnm (Swift should

have thought it a pattern for humanity). It was in the garden of his college (Trinity); and he expressed a hope that I should feel inspired then "by the muse of Warton." I was not acquainted with the writings of Warton at that time; and perhaps my ignorance was fortunate; for it was not till long after my acquaintance with them, that I saw further into their merits, than the very first anti-commonplaces would have discerned, and as I had not acquired even those at that period, and my critical presumption was on a par with my poetical, I should probably have given the professor to understand, that I had no esteem for that kind of second-hand inspiration. I was not aware that my own was precisely of the same kind, and as different from Warton's as poverty from acquirement.

At Oxford, my love of boating had nearly cost me my life. I had already had a bit of a taste of drowning in the river Thames, in consequence of running a boat too hastily on shore; but it was nothing to what I experienced on this occasion. The schoolfellow whom I was visiting was the friend whose family lived in Spring Gardens. We had gone out in a little decked skiff, and not expecting disasters in the gentle Isis, I had fastened the sail-line, of which I had the direction, in order that I might read a volume which I had with me, of Mr. Cumberland's novel called "Henry." My friend

was at the helm. The wind grew a little strong; and we had just got into Iffley Reach, when I heard him exclaim, "Hunt, we are over." The next moment I was under the water, gulping it, and giving myself up for lost. The boat had a small opening in the middle of the deck, under which I had thrust my feet; this circumstance had carried me over with the boat, and the worst of it was, I found I had got the sail-line round my neck. My friend, who sat on the deck itself, had been swept off, and got comfortably to shore, which was at a little distance.

My bodily sensations were not so painful as I should have fancied they would have been. My mental reflections were very different, though one of them, by a singular meeting of extremes, was of a comic nature. I thought that I should never see the sky again, that I had parted with all my friends, and that I was about to contradict the proverb which said that a man who was born to be hung, would never be drowned; for the sail-line, in which I felt entangled, seemed destined to perform for me both the offices. On a sudden, I found an oar in my hand, and the next minute I was climbing, with assistance, into a wherry, in which there sat two Oxonians, one of them helping me, and loudly and laughingly differing with the other, who did not at all like the rocking of the boat, and who assured

me, to the manifest contradiction of such senses as I had left, that there was no room. This gentleman is now no more; and I shall not mention his name, because I might do injustice to the memory of a brave man struck with a panic. The name of his companion, if I mistake not, was Russell. I hope he was related to an illustrious person of the same name, to whom I have lately been indebted for what may have been another prolongation of my life.

On returning to town, which I did on the top of an Oxford coach, I was relating this story to the singular person who then drove it (Bobart, who had been a collegian), when a man who was sitting behind surprised us with the excess of his laughter. On asking him the reason, he touched his hat, and said, "Sir, I 'm his footman." Such are the delicacies of the livery, and the glorifications of their masters with which they entertain the kitchen.

This Bobart was a very curious person. I have noticed him in the *Indicator*, in the article on "Coaches." He was a descendant of a horticultural family, who had been keepers of the Physic-Garden at Oxford, and one of whom palmed a rat upon the learned world for a dragon, by stretching out its skin into wings. Tillimant Bobart (for such was the name of our charioteer) had been at college himself, probably as a sizer; but having become pro-

prietor of a stage-coach, he thought fit to be his own coachman; and he received your money and touched his hat like the rest of the fraternity. He had a round red face, with eyes that stared, and showed the white; and having become, by long practice, an excellent capper of verses, he was accustomed to have bouts at that pastime with the collegians whom he drove. It was curious to hear him whistle and grunt, and urge on his horses with the other customary euphonics of his tribe, and then see him flash his eye round upon the capping gentleman who sat behind him, and quote his never-failing line out of Virgil and Horace. In the evening (for he only drove his coach half way to London) he divided his solace after his labours, between his book and his brandy-and-water; but I am afraid with a little too much of the brandy, for his end was not happy.* There was eccentricity in the family, without anything much to show for it. The Bobart who invented the dragon, chuckled over the secret for a long time with a satisfaction that must have cost him many falsehoods; and the first Bobart that is known, used to tag his beard with silver on holidays.

* On the information of Mr. George Hooper, of Oxford, who kindly volunteered the communication as a reader of the *Indicator*, and sent me a very curious letter on the subject; with details, however, that were rather of private than public interest.

If female society had not been wanting, I should have longed to reside at an university; for I have never seen trees, books, and a garden to walk in, but I saw my natural home, provided there was no "monkery" in it. I have always thought it a brave and great saying of Mahomet,—"There is no monkery in Islam."

> "From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:
> They are the books, the arts, the academes,
> Which shew, contain, and nourish all the world."

Were I to visit the universities now, I should explore every corner, and reverently fancy myself in the presence of every great and good man that has adorned them; but the most important people to young men are one another; and I was content with glancing at the haunts of Addison and Warton in Oxford, and at those of Gray, Spenser, and Milton, in Cambridge. Oxford, I found, had greatly the advantage of Cambridge in point of country. You could understand well enough how poets could wander about Iffley and Woodstock; but when I visited Cambridge, the nakedness of the land was too plainly visible under a sheet of snow, through which gutters of ditches ran, like ink, by the side of leafless sallows, which resembles huge pincushions stuck on posts. The town, however, made amends; and Cambridge has the advantage of Oxford in a

remarkable degree, as far as regards eminent names. England's two greatest philosophers, Bacon and Newton, and (according to Tyrwhitt) three out of its four great poets, were bred there, besides double the number of minor celebrities. Oxford even did not always know "the goods the gods provided." It repudiated Locke; alienated Gibbon; and had nothing but angry sullenness and hard expulsion to answer to the inquiries which its very ordinances encouraged in the sincere and loving spirit of Shelley.

Yet they are divine places, both;—full of grace and beauty, and scholarship; of reverend antiquity, and ever young nature and hope. Their faults, if of worldliness in some, are those of time and of conscience in more, and if the more pertinacious on those accounts, will merge into a like conservative firmness, when still nobler developments are in their keeping. So at least I hope; and so may the Fates have ordained; keeping their gowns among them as a symbol that learning is indeed something which ever learns; and instructing them to teach love, and charity, and inquiry, with the same accomplished authority, as that with which they have taught assent.

My book was unfortunately successful everywhere, particularly in the metropolis. The critics were

extremely kind; and, as it was unusual at that time to publish at so early a period of life, my age made me a kind of "Young Roscius" in authorship. I was introduced to literati, and shown about among parties. My father taking me to see Dr. Raine, Master of the Charter-House, the doctor, who was very kind and pleasant, but who probably drew none of our deductions in favour of the young writer's abilities, warned me against the perils of authorship; adding as a final dehortative, that "the shelves were full." It was not till we came away, that I thought of an answer, which I conceived would have "annihilated" him. "Then, sir" (I should have said), "we will make another." Not having been in time with this repartee, I felt all that anguish of undeserved and unnecessary defeat, which has been so pleasantly described in the *Miseries of Human Life*. This, thought I, would have been an answer befitting a poet, and calculated to make a figure in biography.

A mortification that I encountered at a house in Cavendish Square affected me less, though it surprised me a good deal more. I had been held up, as usual, to the example of the young gentlemen, and the astonishment of the young ladies, when, in the course of the dessert, one of mine

host's daughters, a girl of exuberant spirits, and not of the austerest breeding, came up to me, and, as if she had discovered that I was not so young as I pretended to be, exclaimed, "What a beard you have got!" at the same time convincing herself of the truth of her discovery by taking hold of it! Had I been a year or two older, I should have taken my revenge. As it was, I know not how I behaved, but the next morning I hastened to have a beard no longer.

I was now a man, and resolved not to be out of countenance next time. Not long afterwards, my grandfather, sensible of the new fame in his family, but probably alarmed at the fruitless consequences to which it might lead, sent me word, that if I would come to Philadelphia, "he would make a man of me." I sent word, in return, that "men grew in England as well as America;" an answer which repaid me for the loss of my apophthegm at Dr. Raine's. I was very angry with him for his niggardly conduct to my mother. I could not help, for some time, identifying the whole American character with his; and I still have a tendency to do so, in spite of relationship. I would fain think it unjust; and of course it is so, as far as regards individuals. For the rest, I must refer for my vindication to Pennsylvanian bond-holders, southern slave-holders, and to my

friends the United States booksellers, who do us so much honour in taking our books, and giving us nothing in exchange. I love Emerson, and Bryant, and Lowell, and some others, and all Philadelphia women in particular, for the sake of my mother; but as a nation, I cannot get it out of my head, that the Americans are Englishmen with the poetry and romance taken out of them; and that there is one great counter built along their coast from north to south, behind which they are all standing like so many linendrapers. They will be far otherwise, I have no doubt, in time; and this unchristian opinion of them have come to nothing.

Partly on the same account, I acquired a dislike for my grandfather's friend Dr. Franklin, author of *Poor Richard's Almanack:* a heap, as it appeared to me, of "scoundrel maxims."* I think I now appre-

* Thomson's phrase, in the *Castle of Indolence*, speaking of a miserly money-getter:—

"'A penny saved is a penny got;'
Firm to this scoundrel maxim keepeth he,
Ne of its rigour will he bate a jot,
Till it hath quench'd his fire and banished his pot."

The reader will not imagine that I suppose all money-makers to be of this description. Very gallant spirits are to be found among them, who only take to this mode of activity for want of a better, and are as generous in disbursing as they are vigorous in acquiring. You may always know the common run, as in

ciate Dr. Franklin as I ought; but although I can see the utility of such publications as his Almanack for a rising commercial state, and hold it useful as a memorandum to uncalculating persons like myself, who happen to live in an old one, I think it has no business either in commercial nations long established, or in others who do not found their happiness in that sort of power. Franklin, with all his abilities, is but at the head of those who think that man lives "by bread alone." He will commit none of the follies, none of the intolerances, the absence of which is necessary to the perfection of his system; and in setting his face against these, he discountenances a great number of things very inimical to higher speculations. But he was no more a fit representative of what human nature largely requires, and may reasonably hope to attain to, than negative represents positive, or the clearing away a ground in the back-settlements, and setting to work upon it, represents the work in its completion. Something of the

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other instances, by the soreness with which they feel attacks on the body corporate.

For the assertion that Dr. Franklin cut off his son with a shilling, my only authority is family tradition. It is observable, however, that the friendliest of his biographers are not only forced to admit that he seemed a little too fond of money, but notice the mysterious secrecy in which his family history is involved.

pettiness and materiality of his first occupation always stuck to him. He took nothing for a truth or a matter-of-fact that he could not handle, as it were, like his types; and yet, like all men of this kind, he was liable, when put out of the ordinary pale of his calculations, to fall into the greatest errors, and substitute the integrity of his reputation for that of whatsoever he chose to do. From never doing wrong in little things, he conceived that he could do no wrong in great; and, in the most deliberate act of his life, he showed he had grievously mistaken himself. He was, I allow, one of the *cardinal* great men of his time. He was Prudence. But he was not what he took himself for,—all the other Virtues besides; and, inasmuch as he was deficient in those, he was deficient even in his favourite one. He was not Temperance; for, in the teeth of his capital recommendations of that virtue, he did not scruple to get burly and big with the enjoyments that he cared for. He was not Justice; for he knew not how to see fair play between his own wisdom and that of a thousand wants and aspirations, of which he knew nothing: and he cut off his son with a shilling, for differing with him in politics. Lastly, he was not Fortitude; for, having few passions and no imagination, he knew not what it was to be severely tried; and if he had been, there is

every reason to conclude, from the way in which he treated his son, that his self-love would have been the part in which he felt the torture;—that as his Justice was only arithmetic, so his Fortitude would have been nothing but stubbornness.

If Franklin had been the only great man of his time, he would merely have contributed to make the best of a bad system, and so hurt the world by prolonging it; but, luckily, there were the French and English philosophers besides, who saw farther than he did, and provided for higher wants. I feel grateful to him, for one, inasmuch as he extended the sphere of liberty, and helped to clear the earth of the weeds of sloth and ignorance, and the wild beasts of superstition; but when he comes to build final homes for us, I rejoice that wiser hands interfere. His line and rule are not everything; they are not even a tenth part of it. Cocker's numbers are good; but those of Plato and Pythagoras have their merits too, or we should have been made of dry bones and tangents, and not had the fancies in our heads, and the hearts beating in our bosoms, that make us what we are. We should not even have known that Cocker's numbers were worth anything; nor would Dr. Franklin himself have played on the harmonica, albeit he must have done it in a style very different from that of Milton or Cimarosa.

Finally, the writer of this passage on the Doctor would not have ventured to give his opinion of so great a man in so explicit a manner. I should not have ventured to give it, had I not been backed by so many powerful interests of humanity, and had I not suffered in common, and more than in common, with the rest of the world, from a system which, under the guise of economy and social advantage, tends to double the love of wealth and the hostility of competition, to force the best things down to a level with the worst, and to reduce mankind to the simplest and most mechanical law of their nature, divested of its heart and soul,—the law of being in motion. Most of the advantages of the present system of money-making, which may be called the great *lay* superstition of modern times, might be obtained by a fifth part of the labour, if more equally distributed. Yet all the advantages could not be so obtained; and the system is necessary as a portion of the movement of time and progress, and as the ultimate means of dispensing with its very self.

Among those with whom my book made me acquainted, was the late Rev. Mr. Maurice, of the British Museum, author of "Indian Antiquities." I mention him more particularly, as I do others, because he had a character of his own, and makes a

portrait. I had seen an engraving of him, representing a slender, prim-eyed, enamel-faced person, very tightly dressed and particular, with no expression but that of propriety. What was my surprise, when I beheld a short, chubby, good-humoured companion, with boyish features, and a lax dress and manner, heartily glad to see you, and tender over his wine! He was a sort of clerical Horace. He might, by some freak of patronage, have been made a bishop; and he thought he deserved it for having proved the identity of the Hindoo with the Christian Trinity, which was the object of his book! But he began to despond on that point, when I knew him; and he drank as much wine for sorrow, as he would, had he been made a bishop, for joy. He was a man of a social and overflowing nature; more fit, in truth, to set an example of charity than faith; and would have made an excellent Bramin of the Rama-Deeva worship.

Maurice's Hymns to the gods of India were as good as Sir William Jones's, and his attention to the amatory theology of the country (allowing for his deficiency in the language) as close. He was not so fortunate as Sir William in retaining a wife whom he loved. I have heard him lament, in very genuine terms, his widowed condition, and the task of finishing the great manuscript catalogue of the Museum

books, to which his office had bound him. This must have been a torture, physical as well as moral; for he had weak eyes, and wrote with a magnifying-glass as big round as the palm of his hand. With this, in a tall thick handwriting, as if painting a set of rails, he was to finish the folio catalogues, and had produced the seven volumes of Indian Antiquities! Nevertheless, he seemed to lament his destiny, rather in order to accommodate the weakness of his lachrymal organs, than out of any mental uneasiness; for with the aspect he had the spirits of a boy; and his laughter would follow his tears with a happy incontinence. He was always catching cold, and getting well of it after dinner.

Many a roast fowl and bottle of wine have I enjoyed with Thomas Maurice in his rooms at the British Museum; and if I thought the reader, as well as myself, had not a regard for him, I would not have opened their doors. They were in a turret in the court-yard walls, and exist, alas! no longer. I never passed them, without remembering how he used to lay down his magnifying-glass, take both my hands, and condescend to anticipate the pleasant chat we should have about authors and books over his wine;—I say, condescend, because, though he did not affect anything of that sort, it was a remarkable instance of his good-nature, and his freedom from

pride, to place himself on a level in this manner with a youth in his teens, and pretend that I brought him as much amusement as he gave. Owing to the exclusive notions I entertained of friendship, I mystified him by answering the "Dear sirs" of his letters in a more formal manner. I fear it induced him to make unfavourable comparisons of my real disposition with my behaviour at table; and it must be allowed, that having no explanation on the subject, he had a right to be mystified. Somehow or other (I believe it was because a new Dulcinea called me elsewhere), the acquaintance dropped, and I did not see him for many years.

He died, notwithstanding his wine and his catarrhs, at a good old age, writing verses to the last, and showing what a young heart he retained by his admiration of nature: and undoubtedly this it was that enabled him to live so long; for though the unfeeling are apt to outlast the sensitive during a sophisticate and perplexing state of society, it is astonishing how long a cordial pulse will keep playing, if allowed reasonably to have its way. Were the lives of mankind as natural as they should be, and their duties rendered as cheerful, the Maurices and Horaces would outlast all the formalists buttoned up in denial, as surely as the earth spins round, and the pillars fall.

I wish I could relate half the stories Mr. Maurice told me. He told them well, and I should have been glad to repeat them in his own words. I recollect but one, which I shall tell for his sake, though it is not without a jest. I hope it is not old. He said there was a gentleman, not very robust, but an enthusiast for nature and good health, who entertained a prodigious notion of the effects of smelling to fresh earth.* Accordingly, not to go too nicely about the matter, but to do it like a man, he used to walk every morning to Primrose-hill; and, digging a hole of a good depth in the ground, prostrate himself, and put his head in it. The longer he kept his head immersed, the more benefit he thought he derived; so that he would lie for several minutes, and look like a Persian adoring the sun. One day

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* Bacon had a notion of this sort, and would have a piece of earth brought him fresh out of the ground to smell to; but then he put wine to it. I fancy I hear Mr. Maurice exclaiming, "Ah, he was a great man!" There was a pomp and altitude in the ways of Bacon, and all in the highest taste, that serves almost to reconcile us to Cowley's conceit, in styling him "Nature's Lord Chancellor." His house and gardens were poetically magnificent. He had the flowers in season always put upon his table; sometimes had music in the next room while he was writing; and would ride out in an open chariot during the rain, with his head bare, saying, "he felt the spirit of the universe upon him!"

some thieves set upon him, and, retaining his head under that salutary restriction, picked his pockets.

Mr. Maurice got me permission to read in the Museum; which I did regularly for some time. It was there I began to learn Italian. I obtained the same privilege for a person who became one of its most enthusiastic visitors, and who is worthy describing. His name is Llwyd (for he would account it treason to his country to write it Lloyd), and he is author, among other pieces, of a poem entitled "Beaumaris Bay," which obtained a great deal of praise from the critics. I say "is," because I hope he is alive to read this account of himself, and to attribute it (as he assuredly will do) to its proper motives. Mr. Llwyd was probably between thirty and forty when I knew him. His face and manner of speaking were as Ancient British as he could desire; but these merits he possessed in common with others. What rendered him an extraordinary person was, that he raised himself, by dint of his talents and integrity, from the situation of a gentleman's servant to a footing with his superiors, and they were generous and wise enough to acknowledge it. From what I was told, nothing could be better done on all sides. They encouraged, and, I believe, enabled him to make good his position; and he gave the best proof of his right to it, by the delicacy

of his acquiescence. His dress was plain and decent, equally remote from sordidness and pretension; and his manners possessed that natural good-breeding which results from the wish to please and the consciousness of being respected. Mr. Llwyd came to London at certain periods, took an humble lodging, and passed his time in visiting his friends, and reading at the Museum. His passion was for the antiquities of his native country. If you looked over his book, it was most probably full of the coat-armour of Wynnes and Prices.

I was indebted to Mr. Llwyd for an introduction to his friend Mr. Owen, translator of the *Paradise Lost* into Welsh. Both of them were of the order of Bards; and Mr. Owen carried the same seal of his British origin in his face and manners, and appeared to possess the same simplicity and goodness. Furthermore, he had a Welsh harp in his room, and I had the satisfaction of hearing him play upon it. He was not very like Gray's bard: and instead of Conway's flood, and a precipice, and an army coming to cut our throats, we had tea and bread and butter, and a snug parlour with books in it. Notwithstanding my love of Gray, and a considerable wish to see a proper ill-used bard, I thought this a better thing, though I hardly know whether my friends did. I am not sure, with all their good-nature, whether

they would not have preferred a good antiquarian death, with the opportunity of calling King Edward a rascal, and playing their harps at him, to all the Saxon conveniences of modern times.

But I must speak a little of events as well as persons.

The respect which, in matters of religion, I felt for the "spirit which giveth life," in preference to the "letter which killeth," received a curious corroboration from a circumstance which I witnessed on board a Margate hoy. Having nothing to do, after the publication of my poor volume, but to read and to look about me, a friend proposed an excursion to Brighton. We were to go first to Margate, and then walk the rest of the way by the sea-side, for the benefit of the air.

We took places accordingly in the first hoy that was about to sail, and speedily found ourselves seated and moving. We thought the passengers a singularly staid set of people for holiday-makers, and could not account for it. The impression by degrees grew so strong, that we resolved to inquire into the reason; and it was with no very agreeable feelings, that we found ourselves fixed for the day on board what was called the "Methodist hoy." The vessel, it seems, was under the particular patronage of the sect of that denomination; and it professed to sail "by Divine Providence."

Dinner brought a little more hilarity into the faces of these children of heaven. One innocently proposed a game at riddles; another entertained a circle of hearers by a question in arithmetic; a third (or the same person, if I remember,—a very dreary gentleman) raised his voice into some remarks on "atheists and deists," glancing, while he did it, at the small knot of the uninitiated who had got together in self-defence; on which a fourth gave out a hymn of Dr. Watts's, which says that—

> "Religion never was designed
> To make our pleasures less."

It was sung, I must say, in a tone of the most impartial misery, as if on purpose to contradict the opinion.

Thus passed the hours, between formality, and eating and drinking, and psalm-singing, and melancholy attempts at a little mirth, till night came on; when our godly friends vanished below into their berths. The wind was against us: we beat out to sea, and had a taste of some cold autumnal weather. Such of us as were not prepared for this, adjusted ourselves as well as we could to the occasion, or paced about the deck to warm ourselves, not a little amused with the small crew of sailors belonging to the vessel, who sat together singing songs in a low

tone of voice, in order that the psalm-singers below might not hear them.

During one of these pacings about the deck, my foot came in contact with a large bundle which lay as much out of the way as possible, but which I had approached unawares. On stooping to see what it was, I found it was a woman. She was sleeping, and her clothes were cold and damp.

As the captain could do nothing for her, except refer me to the "gentlefolks" below, in case any room could be made for her in their dormitory, I repaired below accordingly; and with something of a malicious benevolence, persisted in waking every sleeper in succession, and stating the woman's case.

Not a soul would stir. They had paid for their places: the woman should have done the same; and so they left her to the care of the "Providence," under which they sailed.

I do not wish to insinuate by this story that many excellent people have not been Methodists. All I mean to say is, that here was a whole Margate hoy full of them; that they had feathered their nests well below; that the night was trying; that to a female it might be dangerous; and that not one of them, nevertheless, would stir to make room for her.

As Methodism is a fact of the past, and of the present, I trust it may have had its uses. The

degrees of it are various, from the blackest hue of what is called Calvinistic Methodism to colours little distinguishable from the mildest and pleasantest of conventional orthodoxy. Accidents of birth, breeding, brain, heart, and temperament make worlds of difference in this respect, as in all others. But where the paramount doctrine of a sect, whatever it may profess to include, is Self-preservation, and where this paramount doctrine, as it needs must when actually paramount, blunts in very self-defence the greatest final sympathies with one's fellow-creatures, the transition of ideas is easy from unfeelingness in a future state to unfeelingness in the present; and it becomes a very little thing indeed to let a woman lie out in the cold all night, while saints are snoozing away in comfort.

My companion and I, much amused, and not a little indignant, took our way from Ramsgate along the coast, turning cottages into inns as our hunger compelled us, sleeping at night the moment we laid our heads on our pillows, and making such prodigious breakfasts, that in one instance we had a consultation whether we should muster up face enough to ask for more toast. The rapid answer of the waiter, and his total unconsciousness of our feelings, highly delighted us. We did not consider, that the vaster the orders, the more reasonable he would think us.

We passed Pegwell Bay, famous for shrimps; Sandwich, once famous for oysters; Deal, where I thought of the porpoises; Dover, where we looked over the cliff, visited the castle, and were saluted by something that came tinkling down in the air (a prisoner's money-box on a string); Folkestone, Hythe, Dymchurch; New Romney, an old place; Pevensey, where we poked about the ruins of a castle; Lewes and the river Ouse, a name that seems common to muddy places; Beachey-Head, where Charlotte Smith picked flowers and wrote pretty sonnets; and so came to Brighton, where we put up at the "Ship," and got acquainted with a regular inn-living gentleman.

This personage had a red face, a good appetite, and some prevailing ailment which he soothed with sea-air, and exasperated with good living. He had his meals set forth in the nicest manner; was thin and irritable, though good-natured; seemed to pass half of his morning in thinking of what he should eat, and seeing to it himself; and was very glad after dinner if you would talk to him, and amuse him, and listen to what he thought wholesome, and judicious, and *comme il faut.*

I recollect nothing else of Brighton, except that the Prince of Wales used to be there. Perhaps this was the reason why our red-faced friend chose it for

his watering-place. He was just the man to hover on the borders of high life, and love to repose himself by the side of a polite, a princely, and an epicurean satisfaction. I should take him to have been a retired confectioner; or a clerk in Doctors Commons, or the Herald's Office; or the son of some agent of all work, who had claims on the nobility, which he took out in a sense of the connection.

At Dover, while being shown through the corridors in the rock, we were struck by a deep voice which suddenly opened above our heads. Looking up, we saw a head and shoulders leaning out of a corridor above, and reading a book by the light of an orifice still higher. It was somebody reading the Bible to some soldiers. Such at least is my recollection.

At Pevensey, a landlord on a Sunday morning was so charmed with our exploits in the breakfast line, that he did all he could to make us stop dinner by enlarging on the merits of the village preacher. He lamented the loss we should have of so admirable a sermon; said everybody came to hear him; that we were in luck to be on the spot, &c. At length, finding his rhetoric of no avail on the spiritual side, he concluded by describing the charming piece of beef in his larder.

Not so hospitable was a farm-house in Pevensey

Marsh. We reached it benighted, and being much fatigued, and desirous of going no farther, knocked and re-knocked for a chance of admission, but in vain. We saw, through a hole in the door, a party of men and women seated by a hearth; but they would not attend to us. At length on our knocking louder, and bawling through the hole, they bade us, with insolent speeches, to be gone. We departed in disgust, shaking the dust (or mud) off our feet, and wondering at the state of existing virtue, when such honest people as ourselves could be refused a night's lodging. But to say nothing of want of room, honest, or at any rate legal people, were perhaps those they most objected to. They may have taken us for emissaries of the custom-house. The whole region thereabouts was a great anticipator of free-trade.

These little incidents and characters that we met with in our journey, reminded us of passages in Fielding and his brother novelists. They lay in the same path of reality. Fielding and Smollett did but meet with similar things, and describe them better. One little passage, insignificant in itself, or only amusing from its apparent caricature, was identical with one that we had met with in books; and I here relate it, to show how a seeming caricature may be simple matter of fact. Inquiring our

way of a countryman, he began his answer by inquiring in turn which way we came. On obtaining that favourite and superfluous piece of information, he directed us to go by "Miss Shore's house." We asked whereabouts we should have the pleasure of seeing Miss Shore's house, and what sort of house it was. "Lord!" cried he, in amazement, "What! don't you know Miss Shore's house?"

These absurd answers were precisely the same they had been a hundred years before; probably a thousand, or ten thousand. Chaucer met with them on the road to Canterbury. Kow Moo gave them in China to Confucius. They are the last local oracles that will retreat before the diffusion of knowledge!

The length of this journey, which did us good, we reckoned to be a hundred and twelve miles; and we did it in four days, which was not bad walking. But the brother whom I have mentioned as still living, has gone a hundred miles in two. He also, when a lad, kept up at a kind of trotting pace with a friend's horse all the way from Finchley to Pimlico. His limbs were admirably well set.

The friend who was my companion in this journey had not been long known to me; but he was full of good qualities. He died a few years afterwards in France, where he unhappily found himself

among his countrymen, whom Bonaparte so iniquitously detained at the commencement of the second war. He was brother of my old friend Henry Robertson, treasurer of Covent Garden Theatre, in whose company and that of Vincent Novello, Charles Cowden Clarke, and other gifted and estimable men, I have enjoyed some of the most harmonious evenings of my life, in every sense of the word. Towards the latter part of his detention he wrote me a letter which I delayed answering, till answer was of no use; and I mention the circumstance, and shall notice another instance or two of procrastination on my part, in case they may serve, even on one single occasion, to give a casting vote in favour of promptness to some reader, who may be doubting whether he shall procrastinate or not. For out of a single moment so delayed may spring hundreds full of regret. I have already noticed one, in speaking of a schoolfellow. A third delay in writing a letter caused me still greater pain on a similar account; and for nearly fifty years I have had a pang now and then come over me for not having posted a letter which was given me for that purpose by my mother. It was to my eldest brother, who had been "wild." He was then in America, and has never been heard of since. I never posted that letter at all; and finding it months afterwards in my

possession I did, what I hope nobody will believe me capable of doing on any dissimilar occasion, opened it, in order to see what amount of evil I may have caused, and to make the confession of having done so to the writer, in case of necessity. Fortunately it was only a letter of affection and general advice, and I said nothing about it. But as my mother, for aught I know to the contrary, never again heard of her son, how was I to be certain that the want of the letter might not have done him some injury, and caused anguish to herself from his silence? I do not wish to make mountains of molehills, or to pretend that I may never have caused pain to others, of a worse nature than this. Perhaps I have, though with as little intention; for deliberately, or apart from unforeseen consequences of thoughtlessness and vanity, I never distressed human being; and as I have undergone my distresses in turn, and hope I have not lived altogether for nothing, I comfort myself and am comforted, as I would have all the world comfort one another. I have found myself in my time on jarring ground with acquaintances; I have been preposterously misrepresented by enemies; but I never ended with losing the good-will of friends. I must add, as some diminution of my offence in not answering the above letters, that I had always in-

tended to do so, and that the delay was partly caused by my wishing to do it in the fullest manner; but what signify intentions, half occasioned perhaps by a sense of our importance, if a friend is to die under the impression of his being neglected?

Let me revert to a pleasanter recollection. The companion of my journey to Brighton, and another brother of his, who was afterwards in the commissariat (they are all dead, except my friend of Covent Garden), set up a little club to which I belonged, called the "Elders," from our regard for the wine of that name, with hot goblets of which we finished the evening. Not the wine so called, which you buy in the shops, and which is a mixture of brandy and verjuice; but the vintage of the genuine berry, which is admired wherever it is known, and which the ancients unquestionably symbolized under the mystery of the Bearded Bacchus, the senior god of that name,—

Brother of Bacchus, *elder* born.

The great Boerhaave held the tree in such pleasant reverence for the multitude of its virtues, that he is said to have taken off his hat whenever he passed it.

Be this as it may, so happily it sent us to our

beds, with such an extraordinary twofold inspiration of Bacchus and Somnus, that falling to sleep we would dream half an hour after of the last jest, and wake up again in laughter.

CHAPTER VI.

PLAYGOING AND VOLUNTEERS.

Threatened invasion by the French.—The St. James's Volunteers.— Singular debut of their Colonel. — Satire of Foote. — A taste of campaigning.—Recollections of the stage at the beginning of the present century.—Farley, De Camp, Miss De Camp, Emery, Kelly and Mrs. Crouch, Catalani, Mrs. Billington, Madame Grassini, Braham, Pasta and Lablache, female singers in general; Ambrogetti, Vestris the dancer, Parisot; singing and dancing former times and present; Jack Bannister, Fawcett, Munden, Elliston, Mathews, Dowton, Cooke, the Kembles and Mrs. Siddons, and Mrs. Jordan.— Playgoing in youth. — Critical playgoing.— Playgoing in general not what it was.—Social position of actors in those times. — John Kemble and a noble lord at a booksale.— Earl Spencer.

A KNOCK at the doors of all England awoke us up from our dreams. It was Bonaparte, threatening to come among us, and bidding us put down "that glass."

The "Elders," in common with the rest of the world, were moved to say him nay, and to drink, and drill themselves, to his confusion.

I must own that I never had the slightest belief in this coming of Bonaparte. It did, I allow, sometimes appear to me not absolutely impossible; and very strange it was to think, that some fine morning I might actually find myself face to face with a parcel of Frenchmen in Kent or Sussex, instead of playing at soldiers in Piccadilly. But I did not believe in his coming; first, because I thought he had far wiser things to attend to; secondly, because he made such an ostentatious show of it; and thirdly, because I felt, that whatever might be our party politics, it was not in the nature of things English to allow it. Nobody, I thought, could believe it possible, who did but see and hear the fine, unaffected, manly young fellows that composed our own regiment of volunteers, the St. James's, and whose counterparts had arisen in swarms all over the country. It was too great a jest. And, with all due respect for French valour, I think so to this day.

The case was not the same as in the time of the Normans. The Normans were a more advanced people than the Saxons; they possessed a familiar and family interest among us; and they had even a right to the throne. But in the year 1802, the French and English had, for centuries, been utterly distinct as well as rival nations; the latter had twice beaten the French on French ground, and under

the greatest disadvantages: how much less likely were they to be beaten on their own, under every circumstance of exasperation? They were an abler-bodied nation than the French; they had been bred up, however erroneously, in a contempt for them, which (in a military point of view) was salutary, when it was not careless; and, in fine, here were all these volunteers, as well as troops of the line, taking the threat with an ease too great even to laugh at it, but at the same time sedulously attending to their drills, and manifestly resolved, if the struggle came, to make a personal business of it, and see which of the two nations had the greatest pluck.

The volunteers would not even take the trouble of patronizing a journal that was set up to record their movements and to flatter their self-respect. A word of praise from the king, from the commander-in-chief, or the colonel of the regiment, was well enough; it was all in the way of business; but why be told what they knew, or be encouraged when they did not require it? Wags used to say of the journal in question, which was called the *Volunteer*, that it printed only one number, sold only one copy, and that this copy had been purchased by a volunteer drummer-boy. The boy, seeing the paper set out for sale, exclaimed, "The *Volunteer!* why, I'm a volunteer;" and so he bought that solitary image of

himself. The boy was willing to be told that he was doing something more than playing at soldiers; but what was this to the men?

This indifferent kind of self-respect and contentment did not hinder the volunteers, however, from having a good deal of pleasant banter of one another among themselves, or from feeling that there was something now and then among them ridiculous in respect to appearances. A gallant officer in our regiment, who was much respected, went among us by the name of Lieutenant Molly, on account of the delicacy of his complexion. Another, who was a strict disciplinarian, and had otherwise a spirit of love for the profession, as though he had been a born soldier, was not spared allusions to his balls of perfumery. Our major (now no more) was an undertaker in Piccadilly, of the name of Downs, very fat and jovial, yet active withal, and a good soldier. He had one of those lively, juvenile faces that are sometimes observed in people of a certain sleek kind of corpulency. This ample field-officer was "cut and come again" for jokes of all sorts. Nor was the colonel himself spared, though he was a highly respectable nobleman, and nephew to an actual troop-of-the-line conqueror, the victor of Montreal. But this requires a paragraph or two to itself.

We had been a regiment for some time, without a colonel. The colonel was always about to be declared, but declared he was not; and meantime we mustered about a thousand strong, and were much amazed, and, perhaps, a little indignant. At length the moment arrived—the colonel was named; he was to be introduced to us; and that nothing might be wanting to our dignity, he was a lord, and a friend of the minister, and nephew to the victor aforesaid.

Our parade was the court-yard of Burlington House. The whole regiment attended. We occupied three sides of the ground. In front of us were the great gates, longing to be opened. Suddenly the word is given, "My lord is at hand!" Open burst the gates—up strikes the music. "Present arms!" vociferates the major.

In dashes his lordship, and is pitched right over his horse's head to the ground.

It was the most unfortunate anticlimax that could have happened. Skill, grace, vigour, address, example, ascendancy, mastery, victory, all were, in a manner, to have been presented to us in the heroical person of the noble colonel; and here they were, prostrated at our feet—ejected—cast out—humiliated—ground to the earth; subjected (for his merciful construction) to the least fellow-soldier that stood among us, upright on his feet.

The construction, however, was accorded. Everybody felt indeed, that the greatest of men might have been subjected to the accident. It was the horse, not he, that was in fault—it was the music—the ringing of the arms, &c. His spirit had led him to bring with him too fiery a charger. Bucephalus might have thrown Alexander at such a moment. A mole-hill threw William the Third. A man might conquer Bonaparte, and yet be thrown from his horse. And the conclusion was singularly borne out in another quarter; for no conqueror, I believe, whose equitation is ascertained, ever combined more numerous victories with a greater number of falls from his saddle, than his lordship's illustrious friend, the Duke of Wellington.

During our field-days, which sometimes took place in the neighbourhood celebrated by Foote in his *Mayor of Garrat*, it was impossible for those who were acquainted with his writings, not to think of his city trained-bands and their dreadful "marchings and counter-marchings from Acton to Ealing, and from Ealing back again to Acton." We were not "all robbed and murdered," however, as we returned home, "by a single footpad." We returned, not by the Ealing stage, but in right warlike style, marching and dusty. We had even, one day, a small taste of the will and appetite of campaigning. Some of us,

after a sham-fight, were hastening towards Acton, in a very rage of hunger and thirst, when we discerned coming towards us a baker with a basket full of loaves. To observe the man; to see his loaves scattered on the ground; to find ourselves, each with one of them under his arm, tearing the crumb out, and pushing on for the village, heedless of the cries of the pursuing baker, was (in the language of the novelists) the work of a moment. Next moment we found ourselves standing in the cellar of an Acton alehouse, with the spigots torn out of the barrels, and everybody helping himself as he could. The baker and the beer-man were paid, but not till we chose to attend to them; and I fully comprehended, even from this small specimen of the will and pleasure of soldiers, what savages they could become on graver occasions.

In this St. James's regiment of volunteers were three persons whom I looked on with great interest, for they were actors. They were Farley, Emery, and De Camp, all well-known performers at the time. The first, I believe, is still living. He was a celebrated melo-dramatic actor, remarkable for combining a short, sturdy person with energetic activity; for which reason, if I am not mistaken, in spite of his shortness and his sturdiness, he had got into the light infantry company, where I think I have had

the pleasure of standing both with him and Mr. De Camp. With De Camp certainly. The latter was brother of Miss De Camp, afterwards Mrs. Charles Kemble, an admirable actress in the same line as Farley, and in such characters as *Beatrice* and *Lucy Lockitt*. She had a beautiful figure, fine large dark eyes, and elevated features, fuller of spirit than softness, but still capable of expressing great tenderness. Her brother was nobody in comparison with her, though he was clever in his way, and more handsome. But it was a sort of effeminate beauty, which made him look as if he ought to have been the sister, and she the brother. It was said of him, in a comprehensive bit of alliteration, that he "failed in fops, but there was fire in his footmen."

The third of these histrionic patriots, Mr. Emery, was one of the best actors of his kind the stage ever saw. He excelled, not only in Yorkshiremen, and other rustical comic characters, but in parts of homely tragedy, such as criminals of the lower order; whose conscious guilt he exhibited with such a lively, truthful mixture of clownishness in the mode and intensity in the feeling, as made a startling and terrible picture of the secret passions to which all classes of men are liable.

Emery was also an amateur painter — of landscape, I believe, and of no mean repute. He was a

man of a middle height, rather tall perhaps than otherwise, and with quiet, respectable manners; but with something of what is called a pudding face, and an appearance on the whole not unlike a gentleman farmer. You would not have supposed there was so much emotion in him; though he had purpose, too, in his look; and he died early.

I have been tempted to dilate somewhat on these gentlemen; for though I made no acquaintance with them privately, I was now beginning to look with peculiar interest on the stage, to which I had already wished to be a contributor, and of which I was then becoming a critic. I had written a tragedy, a comedy, and a farce; and my Spring Garden friends had given me an introduction to their acquaintance, Mr. Kelly, of the Opera House, with a view to having the farce brought out by some manager with whom he was intimate. I remember lighting upon him at the door of his music-shop, or saloon, at the corner of the lane in Pall Mall, where the Arcade now begins, and giving him my letter of introduction and my farce at once. He had a quick, snappish, but not ill-natured voice, and a flushed, handsome, and good-humoured face, with the hair about his ears. The look was a little rakish or so, but very agreeable.

Mr. Kelly was extremely courteous to me; but what he said of the farce, or did with it, I utterly

forget. Himself I shall never forget; for as he was the first actor I ever beheld anywhere, so he was one of the first whom I saw on the stage. Actor, indeed, he was none, except inasmuch as he was an acting singer, and not destitute of a certain spirit in everything he did. Neither had he any particular power as a singer, nor even a voice. He said it broke down while he was studying in Italy; where, indeed, he had sung with applause. The little snappish tones I spoke of, were very manifest on the stage: he had short arms, as if to match them, and a hasty step: and yet, notwithstanding these drawbacks, he was heard with pleasure, for he had taste and feeling. He was a delicate composer, as the music in *Blue Beard* evinces; and he selected so happily from other composers, as to give rise to his friend Sheridan's banter, that he was an "importer of music and composer of wines" (for he once took to being a wine-merchant). While in Ireland, during the early part of his career, he adapted a charming air of Martini's to English words, which, under the title of *Oh, thou wert born to please me,* he sang with Mrs. Crouch to so much effect, that not only was it always called for three times, but no play was suffered to be performed without it. It should be added, that Mrs. Crouch was a lovely woman, as well as a beautiful singer, and that the two performers were in love. I

have heard them sing it myself, and do not wonder at the impression it made on the susceptible hearts of the Irish. Twenty years afterwards, when Mrs. Crouch was no more, and while Kelly was singing a duet in the same country with Madame Catalani, a man in the gallery cried out, "Mr. Kelly, will you be good enough to favour us with *Oh, thou wert born to please me?*" The audience laughed; but the call went to the heart of the singer, and probably came from that of the honest fellow who made it. The man may have gone to the play in his youth, with somebody whom he loved by his side, and heard two lovers, as happy as himself, sing what he now wished to hear again.

Madame Catalani was also one of the singers I first remember. I first heard her at an oratorio, where happening to sit in a box right opposite to where she stood, the leaping forth of her amazingly powerful voice absolutely startled me. Women's voices on the stage are apt to rise above all others, but Catalani's seemed to delight in trying its strength with choruses and orchestras; and the louder they became, the higher and more victorious she ascended. In fact, I believe she is known to have provoked and enjoyed this sort of contest. I suspect, however, that I did not hear her when she was at her best or sweetest. My recollection is, that with a great deal

of taste and brilliancy, there was more force than feeling. She was a Roman, with the regular Italian antelope face (if I may so call it); large eyes, with a sensitive elegant nose, and lively expression.

Mrs. Billington also appeared to me to have more brilliancy of execution than depth of feeling. She was a fat beauty, with regular features, and may be seen drawn to the life, in a portrait in Mr. Hogarth's *Memoirs of the Musical Drama*, where she is frightfully dressed in a cropped head of hair, and a waist tucked under her arms—the fashion of the day.

Not so Grassini, a large but perfectly well-made as well as lovely woman, with black hair and eyes, and a countenance as full of feeling as her divine contralto voice. Largeness, or what is called fineness of person, was natural to her, and did not hinder her from having a truly feminine appearance. She was an actress as well as singer. She acted *Proserpina* in Winter's beautiful opera, and might have remained in the recollection of any one who heard and beheld her, as an image of the goddess she represented. My friend, Vincent Novello, saw the composer when the first performance of the piece was over, stoop down (he was a very tall man) and kiss Mrs. Billington's hand for her singing in the character of *Ceres*. I wonder he did not take Grassini in his arms. She must have had a fine soul,

and would have known how to pardon him. But perhaps he did.

With Billington used to perform Braham, who is still in some measure before the public, and from whose wonderful remains of power in his old age they may judge what he must have been in his prime. I mean, with regard to voice; for as to general manner and spirit, it is a curious fact, that, except when he was in the act of singing, he used to be a remarkably insipid performer; and that it was not till he was growing elderly, that he became the animated person we now see him. This, too, he did all on a sudden, to the amusement as well as astonishment of the beholders. When he sang, he was always animated. The probability is, that he had been bred up under masters who were wholly untheatrical, and that something had occurred to set his natural spirit reflecting on the injustice they had done him; though, for a reason which I shall give presently, the theatre, after all, was not the best field for his abilities. He had wonderful execution as well as force, and his voice could also be very sweet, though it was too apt to betray something of that nasal tone which has been observed in Jews, and which is, perhaps, quite as much, or more, a habit in which they have been brought up, than a consequence of organization. The same thing has been noticed

in Americans; and it might not be difficult to trace it to moral, and even to monied causes; those, to-wit, that induce people to retreat inwardly upon themselves; into a sense of their shrewdness and resources; and to clap their finger in self-congratulation upon the organ through which it pleases them occasionally to intimate as much to a bystander, not choosing to trust it wholly to the mouth.

Perhaps it was in some measure the same kind of breeding (I do not say it in disrespect, but in reference to matters of caste, far more discreditable to Christians than Jews) which induced Mr. Braham to quit the Italian stage, and devote himself to his popular and not very refined style of bravura-singing on the English. It was what may be called the loud-and-soft style. There was admirable execution; but the expression consisted in being very soft on the words *love*, *peace*, &c., and then bursting into roars of triumph on the words *hate*, *war*, and *glory*. To this pattern Mr. Braham composed many of the songs written for him; and the public were enchanted with a style which enabled them to fancy that they enjoyed the highest style of the art, while it required only the vulgarest of their perceptions. This renowned vocalist never did himself justice except in the compositions of Handel. When he stood in the concert-room or the oratorio, and opened

his mouth with plain, heroic utterance in the mighty strains of *Deeper and deeper still*, or, *Sound an alarm*, or, *Comfort ye my people*, you felt indeed that you had a great singer before you. His voice which too often sounded like a horn vulgar, in the catch-penny lyrics of Tom Dibdin, now became a veritable trumpet of grandeur and exaltation; the tabernacle of his creed seemed to open before him in its most victorious days; and you might have fancied yourself in the presence of one of the sons of Aaron, calling out to the host of the people from some platform occupied by their prophets.

About the same time Pasta made her first appearance in England, and produced no sensation. She did not even seem to attempt any. Her nature was so truthful, that, having as yet no acquirements to display, it would appear that she did not pretend she had. She must either have been prematurely put forward by others, or, with an instinct of her future greatness, supposed that the instinct itself would be recognised. When she came the second time, after completing her studies, she took rank at once as the greatest genius in her line which the Italian theatre in England had witnessed. She was a great tragic actress; and her singing, in point of force, tenderness, and expression, was equal to her acting. All noble passions belonged to her; and

her very scorn seemed equally noble, for it trampled only on what was mean. When she measured her enemy from head to foot, in *Tancredi*, you really felt for the man, at seeing him so reduced into nothingness. When she made her entrance on the stage, in the same character—which she did right in front of the audience, midway between the side scenes, she waved forth her arms, and drew them quietly together again over her bosom, as if she sweetly, yet modestly, embraced the whole house. And when, in the part of Medea, she looked on the children she was about to kill, and tenderly parted their hair, and seemed to mingle her very eyes in lovingness with theirs, uttering, at the same time, notes of the most wandering and despairing sweetness, every gentle eye melted into tears. She wanted height, and had somewhat too much flesh; but it seemed the substance of the very health of her body, which was otherwise shapely. Her head and bust were of the finest classical mould. An occasional roughness in her lower tones did but enrich them with passion, as people grow hoarse with excess of feeling; and while her voice was in its prime, even a little incorrectness now and then in the notes would seem the consequence of a like boundless emotion; but, latterly, it argued a failure of ear, and consoled the mechanical artists who had been

mystified by her success. In every other respect, perfect truth, graced by idealism, was the secret of Pasta's greatness. She put truth first always; and, in so noble and sweet a mind, grace followed it as a natural consequence.

With the exception of Lablache, that wonderful bass singer, full of might as well as mirth, in whom the same truth, accompanied in some respects by the same grace of feeling, has suffered itself to be overlaid with comic fat (except when he turns it into an heroic amplitude with drapery), I remember no men on our Italian stage equal to the women. Women have carried the palm out and out, in acting, singing, and dancing. The pleasurable seems more the forte of the sex; and the opera house is essentially a palace of pleasure, even in its tragedy. Bitterness there cannot but speak sweetly; there is no darkness, and no poverty; and every death is the death of the swan. When the men are sweet, they either seem feeble, or, as in the case of Rubini, have execution without passion. Naldi was amusing; Tramezzani was elegant; Ambrogetti (whose great big calves seemed as if they ought to have saved him from going into La Trappe) was a fine dashing representative of Don Juan, without a voice. But what were these in point of impression on the public, compared with the woman I have mentioned, or even

with voluptuous Fodor, with amiable Sontag, with charming Malibran (whom I never saw),* or with adorable Jenny Lind (whom, as an Irishman would say, I have seen still less; for not to see her appears to be a deprivation beyond all ordinary conceptions of musical loss and misfortune)?

As to dancers,* male dancers are almost always *gawkies*, compared with female. One forgets the names of the best of them; but who, that ever saw, has forgotten Heberle, or Cerito, or Taglioni? There was a great noise once in France about the Vestrises; particularly old Vestris; but (with all due respect to our gallant neighbours) I have a suspicion that he took the French in with the gravity and *imposingness* of his twirls. There was an imperial demand about Vestris, likely to create for him a corresponding supply of admiration. The most popular dancers of whom I have a recollection, when I was young, were Deshayes, who was rather an elegant posture-master than dancer, and Madame Parisot, who was very thin, and always smiling. I could have seen little dancing in those times, or I should have something to say of the Presles, Didelots and others, who turned the heads of the Yarmouths and Barrymores of the day. Art, in all its branches, has since grown more esteemed; and I suspect, that neither dancing nor singing ever attained so much grace

and beauty as they have done within the last twenty years. The Farinellis and Pacchierottis were a kind of monsters of execution. There were tones, also, in their voices which, in all probability, were very touching. But, to judge from their printed songs, their chief excellence lay in difficult and everlasting roulades. And we may guess, even now, from the prevailing character of French dancing, that difficulty was the great point of conquest with Vestris. There was no such graceful understanding between the playgoers and the performers, no such implied recognition of the highest principles of emotion, as appears to be the case in the present day with the Taglionis and Jenny Linds.

To return to the English boards,—the first actor whom I remember seeing upon them was excellent Jack Bannister. He was a handsome specimen of the best kind of Englishman,—jovial, manly, good-humoured, unaffected, with a great deal of whim and drollery, but never passing the bounds of the decorous; and when he had made you laugh heartily as some yeoman or seaman in a comedy, he could bring the tears into your eyes for some honest sufferer in an afterpiece. He gave you the idea of a good fellow,—a worthy household humourist,—whom it would be both pleasant and profitable to live with; and this was his real character. He had a

taste for pictures, and settled down into a good English gout and the love of his family. I saw him one day hobbling with a stick in Gower-street, where he lived, and the same evening performing the part either of the young squire, Tony Lumpkin, in *She Stoops to Conquer*, or of Acres, in the Comedy of the *Rivals*, I forget which; but in either character he would be young to the last. Next day he would perform the old father, the Brazier, in Colman's sentimental comedy, *John Bull;* and everybody would see that it was a father indeed who was suffering.

This could not be said of Fawcett in the same character, who roared like Bull, but did not feel like John. He was affecting, too, in his way; but it was after the fashion of a great noisy boy, whom you cannot help pitying for his tears, though you despise him for his vulgarity. Fawcett had a harsh, brazen face, and a voice like a knife-grinder's wheel. He was all pertness, coarseness, and effrontery, but with a great deal of comic force; and whenever he came trotting on to the stage (for such was his walk) and pouring forth his harsh, rapid words, with his nose in the air, and a facetious grind in his throat, the audience were prepared for a merry evening.

Munden was a comedian famous for the variety

and significance of his grimaces, and for making something out of nothing by a certain intensity of contemplation. Lamb, with exquisite wit, described him in one sentence, by saying, that he "beheld a leg of mutton in its quiddity." If he laid an emphasis on the word "Holborn," or "button," he did it in such a manner that you thought there was more in "Holborn," or "button," than it ever before entered into your head to conceive. I have seen him, while playing the part of a vagabond loiterer about inn-doors, look at, and gradually approach, a pot of ale on a table from a distance, for ten minutes together, while he kept the house in roars of laughter by the intense idea which he dumbly conveyed of its contents, and the no less intense manifestation of his cautious but inflexible resolution to drink it. So, in acting the part of a credulous old antiquary, on whom an old beaver is palmed for the "hat of William Tell," he reverently put the hat on his head, and then solemnly walked to and fro with such an excessive sense of the glory with which he was crowned, such a weight of reflected heroism, and accumulation of Tell's whole history on that single representative culminating point, elegantly halting every now and then to put himself in the attitude of one drawing a bow, that the spectator could hardly have been

astonished had they seen his hair stand on end, and carry the hat aloft with it. But I must not suffer myself to be led into these details.

Lewis was a comedian of the rarest order, for he combined whimsicality with elegance, and levity with heart. He was the fop, the lounger, the flatterer, the rattlebrain, the sower of wild oats; and in all he was the gentleman. He looked on the stage what he was off it, the companion of wits and men of quality. It is pleasant to know that he was a descendant of Erasmus Lewis, the secretary of Lord Oxford, and friend of Pope and Swift. He was airiness personified. He had a light person, light features, a light voice, a smile that showed the teeth, with good-humoured eyes; and a genial levity pervaded his action, to the very tips of his delicately-gloved fingers. He drew on his glove like a gentleman, and then darted his fingers at the ribs of the character he was talking with, in a way that carried with it whatever was suggestive and sparkling, and amusing. When he died, they put up a classical Latin inscription to his memory, about *elegantiæ* and *lepores* (whims and graces); and you felt that no man better deserved it. He had a right to be recorded as the type of airy genteel comedy.

Elliston was weightier both in manner and person; and he was a tragedian as well as comedian. Not a

great tragedian, though able to make a serious and affecting impression; and when I say weightier in comedy than Lewis, I do not mean heavy; but that he had greater bodily substance and force. In Sir Harry Wildair, for instance, he looked more like the man who could bear rakery and debauch. The engraved portrait of him in a coat bordered with fur is very like. He had dry as well as genial humour, was an admirable representative of the triple hero in *Three and the Deuce*, of Charles Surface, Don Felix, the Duke in the *Honeymoon*, and of all gallant and gay lovers of a robust order, not omitting the most cordial. Indeed, he was the most genuine lover that I ever saw on the stage. No man approached a woman as he did,—with so flattering a mixture of reverence and passion — such closeness without insolence, and such a trembling energy in his words. His utterance of the single word "charming" was a volume of rapturous fervour. I speak, of course, only of his better days. Latterly, he grew flustered with imprudence and misfortune; and from the accounts I have heard of his acting, nobody who had not seen him before could have guessed what sort of man he had been. Elliston, like Lewis, went upon the stage with advantages of training and connections. He was nephew of Dr. Elliston, master of one of the col-

leges at Cambridge; and he was educated at Saint Paul's school.

These are the actors of those days whom I recollect with the greatest pleasure. I include Fawcett, because he was identified with some of the most laughable characters in farce.

To touch on some others. Liston was renowned for an exquisitely ridiculous face and manner, rich with half-conscious, half-unconscious absurdity. The whole piece became *Listonized* the moment he appeared. People longed for his coming back, in order that they might doat on his oily, mantling face, and laugh with him and at him.

Mathews was a genius in mimicry, a facsimile in mind as well as manner; and he was a capital Sir Fretful Plagiary. It was a sight to see him looking wretchedly happy at his victimizers, and digging deeper and deeper into his mortification at every fresh button of his coat that he buttoned up.

Dowton was perfect in such characters as Colonel Oldboy and Sir Anthony Absolute. His anger was no petty irritability, but the boiling of a rich blood, and of a will otherwise genial. He was also by far the best Falstaff.

Cooke, a square-faced, hook-nosed, wide-mouthed, malignantly smiling man, was intelligent and peremptory, and a hard hitter: he seized and strongly kept

your attention; but he was never pleasant. He was too entirely the satirist, the hypocrite, and the villain. He loved too fondly his own caustic and rascally words, so that his voice, which was otherwise harsh, was in the *habit* of melting and dying away inwardly in the secret satisfaction of its smiling malignity. As to his vaunted tragedy, it was a mere reduction of Shakspeare's poetry into indignant prose. He limited every character to its worst qualities; and had no idealism, no affections, no verse.

Kemble was a god compared with Cooke, as far as the ideal was concerned; though, on the other hand, I never could admire Kemble, as it was the fashion to do. He was too artificial, too formal, too critically and deliberately conscious. Nor do I think that he had any genius whatsoever. His power was all studied acquirement. It was this indeed, by the help of his stern Roman aspect, that made the critics like him. It presented, in a noble shape, the likeness of their own capabilities.

Want of genius could not be imputed to his sister, Mrs. Siddons. I did not see her, I believe, in her best days; but she must always have been a somewhat masculine beauty; and she had no love in her, apart from other passions. She was a mistress, however, of lofty, of queenly, and of appalling tragic

effect. Nevertheless, I could not but think that something of too much art was apparent, even in Mrs. Siddons; and she failed, I think, in the highest points of refinement. When she smelt the blood on her hand, for instance, in *Macbeth*, in the scene where she walked in her sleep, she made a face of ordinary disgust, as though the odour was offensive to the senses, not appalling to the mind.

Charles Kemble, who had an ideal face and figure, was the nearest approach I ever saw to Shakspeare's gentlemen; and to heroes of romance. He also made an excellent Cassio. But with the exception of Mrs. Siddons, who was declining, all the reigning school of tragedy had retrograded rather than otherwise, towards the times that preceded Garrick; and the consequence was, that when Kean brought back nature and impulse, he put an end to it at once, as Garrick had put an end to Quin.

In comedy nature had never been wanting; and there was one comic actress, who was nature herself in one of her most genial forms. This was Mrs. Jordan; who, though she was neither beautiful, nor handsome, nor even pretty, nor accomplished, nor "a lady," nor anything conventional or *comme il faut* whatsoever, yet was so pleasant, so cordial, so natural, so full of spirits, so healthily constituted in mind and body, had such a shapely leg withal, so

charming a voice, and such a happy and happy-making an expression of countenance, that she appeared something superior to all those requirements of acceptability, and to hold a patent from nature herself for our delight and good opinion. It is creditable to the feelings of society in general, that allowances are made for the temptations to which the stage exposes the sex; and in Mrs. Jordan's case these were not diminished by a sense of the like consideration due to princely restrictions, and to the manifest domestic dispositions of more parties than one. But she made even Methodists love her. A touching story is told of her apologizing to a poor man of that persuasion for having relieved him. He had asked her name; and she expressed a hope that he would not feel offended when the name was told him. On hearing it, the honest Methodist (he could not have been one on board the hoy) shed tears of pity and admiration, and trusted that he could not do wrong in begging a blessing on her head.

[*Serious Reviewer, interrupting.* But, my good sir, suppose some of your female readers should take it into their heads to be Mrs. Jordan?

Author. Oh, my good sir, don't be alarmed. My female readers are not persons to be so much afraid for, as you seem to think yours are. The stage

itself has taught them large measures both of charity and discernment. They have not been so locked up in restraint, as to burst out of bounds the moment they see a door open for consideration.]

Mrs. Jordan was inimitable in exemplifying the consequences of too much restraint in ill-educated Country-Girls, in Romps, in Hoydens, and in Wards on whom the mercenary have designs. She wore a bib and tucker, and pinafore, with a bouncing propriety, fit to make the boldest spectator alarmed at the idea of bringing such a household responsibility on his shoulders. To see her when thus attired shed blubbering tears for some disappointment, and eat all the while a great thick slice of bread and butter, weeping, and moaning, and munching, and eyeing at every bite the part she meant to bite next, was a lesson against will and appetite worth a hundred sermons of our friends on board the hoy; and, on the other hand, they could assuredly have done and said nothing at all calculated to make such an impression in favour of amiableness as she did, when she acted in gentle, generous, and confiding characters. The way in which she would take a friend by the cheek and kiss her, or make up a quarrel with a lover, or coax a guardian into good-humour, or sing (without accompaniment) the song of *Since then I'm doom'd*, or *In the Dead of the Night*, trust-

ing, as she had a right to do, and as the house wished her to do, to the sole effect of her sweet, mellow, and loving voice—the reader will pardon me, but tears of pleasure and regret come into my eyes at the recollection, as if she personified whatsoever was happy at that period of life, and which has gone like herself. The very sound of the little familiar word *bud* from her lips (the abbreviation of husband), as she packed it closer, as it were, in the utterance, and pouted it up with fondness in the man's face, taking him at the same time by the chin, was a whole concentrated world of the power of loving.

That is a pleasant time of life, the play-going time in youth, when the coach is packed full to go to the theatre, and brothers and sisters, parents and lovers (none of whom, perhaps, go very often) are all wafted together in a flurry of expectation; when the only wish as they go (except with the lovers, is to go as fast as possible, and no sound is so delightful as the cry of "Bill of the Play;" when the smell of links in the darkest and muddiest winter's night is charming; and the steps of the coach are let down; and a roar of hoarse voices round the door, and *mud-shine* on the pavement, are accompanied with the sight of the warm-looking lobby which is about to be entered; and they enter, and

pay, and ascend the pleasant stairs, and begin to hear the *silence* of the house, perhaps the first jingle of the music; and the box is entered amidst some little awkwardness in descending to their places, and being looked at; and at length they sit, and are become used to by their neighbours, and shawls and smiles are adjusted, and the play-bill is handed round or pinned to the cushion, and the gods are a little noisy, and the music veritably commences, and at length the curtain is drawn up, and the first delightful syllables are heard:—

"Ah! my dear Charles, when did you see the lovely Olivia?"

"Oh! my dear Sir George, talk not to me of Olivia. The cruel guardian," &c.

Anon the favourite of the party makes his appearance, and then they are quite happy; and next day, besides his own merits, the points of the dialogue are attributed to him as if he was their inventor. It is not Sir Harry, or old Dornton, or Dubster, who said this or that; but "Lewis," "Munden," or "Keeley." They seem to think the wit really originated with the man who uttered it so delightfully.

Critical play-going is very inferior in its enjoyments to this. It must of necessity blame as well as praise; it becomes difficult to please; it is tempted to prove its own merits, instead of those of its enter-

tainers; and the enjoyments of self-love, besides, perhaps, being ill-founded, and subjecting it to the blame which it bestows, are sorry substitutes, at the best, for hearty delight in others. Never, after I had taken critical pen in hand, did I pass the thoroughly-delightful evenings at the playhouse which I had done when I went only to laugh or be moved. I had the pleasure, it is true, of praising those whom I admired; but the retributive uneasiness of the very pleasure of blaming attended it; the consciousness of self, which on all occasions except loving ones, contains a bitter in its sweet, put its sorry obstacle in the way of an unembarrassed delight; and I found the days flown when I retained none but the good passages of plays and performers, and when I used to carry to my old school-fellows rapturous accounts of the farces of Colman, and the good-natured comedies of O'Keefe.

I speak of my own feelings, and at a particular time of life: but forty or fifty years ago, people of all times of life were much greater play-goers than they are now. They dined earlier; they had not so many newspapers, clubs, and pianofortes; the French Revolution only tended at first to endear the nation to its own habits; it had not yet opened a thousand new channels of thought and interest; nor had railroads conspired to carry people, bodily as well as

mentally, into as many analogous directions. Everything was more concentrated, and the various classes of society felt a greater concern in the same amusements. Nobility, gentry, citizens, princes,—all were frequenters of theatres, and even more or less acquainted personally with the performers. Nobility intermarried with them; gentry, and citizens too, wrote for them; princes conversed and lived with them. Sheridan, and other members of parliament, were managers as well as dramatists. It was Lords Derby, Craven, and Thurlow that sought wives on the stage. Two of the most popular minor dramatists were Cobb, a clerk in the India House, and Birch, the pastry-cook. If Mrs. Jordan lived with the Duke of Clarence (William IV.) as his mistress, nobody doubts that she was as faithful to him as a wife. His brother, the Prince of Wales (George the Fourth), besides his intimacy with Sheridan and the younger Colman, and to say nothing of Mrs. Robinson, took a pleasure in conversing with Kemble, and was the personal patron of O'Keefe and of Kelly. The Kembles, indeed, as Garrick had been, were received everywhere, among the truly best circles; that is to say, where intelligence was combined with high breeding; and they deserved it; for whatever difference of opinion may be entertained as to the amount of genius in the family, nobody who

recollects them will dispute that they were a remarkable race, dignified and elegant in manners, with intellectual tendencies, and in point of aspect very like what has been called "God Almighty's nobility."

I remember once standing behind John Kemble and a noble lord at a sale. It was the celebrated book sale of the Duke of Roxburgh; and by the same token I recollect another person that was present, of whom more by-and-by. The player and the nobleman were conversing, the former in his high, dignified tones, the latter in a voice which I heard but indistinctly. Presently, the actor turned his noble profile to his interlocutor, and on his moving it back again, the man of quality turned his. What a difference! and what a voice! Kemble's voice was none of the best; but, like his profile, it was nobleness itself compared with that of the noble lord. I had taken his lordship for a young man, by the trim cut of his body and of his clothes, the "fall in" of his back, and the smart way in which he had stuck his hat on the top of his head; but when I saw his profile and heard his voice, I seemed to have before me a premature old one. His mouth seemed toothless; his voice was a hasty mumble. Without being aquiline, the face had the appearance of being what may be called an old "nose-and-mouth face." The

suddenness with which it spoke added to the surprise. It was like a flash of decrepitude on the top of a young body.

This was the sale at which the unique copy of Boccaccio fetched a thousand and four hundred pounds. It was bought by the Marquis of Blandford (the late Duke of Marlborough) in competition with Earl Spencer, who conferred with his son, Lord Althorp, and gave it up. So at least I understand, for I was not aware of the conference, or of the presence of Lord Althorp (afterwards minister, and late Earl Spencer). I remember his father well at the sale, and how he sat at the further end of the auctioneer's table, with an air of intelligent indifference, leaning his head on his hand so as to push up the hat a little from off it. I beheld with pleasure in his person the pupil of Sir William Jones, and brother of Coleridge's Duchess of Devonshire. It was curious, and scarcely pleasant, to see two Spencers thus bidding against one another, even though the bone of contention was a book, and the ghost of their illustrious kinsman, the author of the *Faerie Queene*, might have been gratified to see what book it was, and how high the prices of old folios had risen. What satisfaction the Marquis got out of his victory, I cannot say. The Earl, who, I believe, was a genuine lover of books, could

go home and reconcile himself to his defeat by reading the work in a cheaper edition.

I shall have occasion to speak of Mr. Kemble again presently, and of subsequent actors by-and-by.

CHAPTER VII.

ESSAYS IN CRITICISM.

Acquaintance with the British classics, and contribution of a series of articles to an evening paper—Colman and Bonnell Thornton.—Goldsmith again.—Reading of Novels.—Objections to history.—Voltaire.—Youthful theology.—The News.—Critical Essays on the Performers of the London Theatres.—John Kemble and his whims of pronunciation.

I HAD not been as misdirected in the study of prose as in that of poetry. It was many years before I discovered what was requisite in the latter. In the former, the very commonplaces of the schoolmaster tended to put me in the right path, for (as I have already intimated) he found the *Spectator* in vogue, and this became our standard of prose writing.

It is true (as I have also mentioned) that in consequence of the way in which we were taught to use them by the schoolmaster, I had become far more disgusted than delighted with the charming

papers of Addison, and with the exaction of moral observations on a given subject. But the seed was sown, to ripen under pleasanter circumstances; and my father, with his usual good-natured impulse, making me a present one day of a set of the British classics, which attracted my eyes on the shelves of Harley, the bookseller in Cavendish Street, the tenderness with which I had come to regard all my school-recollections, and the acquaintance which I now made for the first time with the lively papers of the *Connoisseur*, gave me an entirely fresh and delightful sense of the merits of essay-writing. I began to think that when Boyer crumpled up and chucked away my "themes" in a passion, he had not done justice to the honest weariness of my anti-formalities, and to their occasional evidences of something better.

The consequence was a delighted perusal of the whole set of classics (for I have ever been a "glutton of books"); and this was followed by my first prose endeavours in a series of papers called the *Traveller*, which appeared in the evening paper of that name (now the *Globe*), under the signature of "Mr. Town, *junior*, Critic and Censor-general," — the senior Mr. Town, with the same titles, being no less a person than my friend of the *Connoisseur*, with whom I thus had the boldness to fraternize. I offered them

with fear and trembling to the editor of the *Traveller*, Mr. Quin, and was astonished at the gaiety with which he accepted them. What astonished me more was a perquisite of five or six copies of the paper, which I enjoyed every Saturday when my essays appeared, and with which I used to re-issue from Bolt Court in a state of transport. I had been told, but could not easily conceive, that the editor of a new evening paper would be happy to fill up his pages with any decent writing; but Mr. Quin praised me besides; and I could not behold the long columns of type, written by myself, in a public paper, without thinking there must be some merit in them, besides that of being a stop-gap.

Luckily, the essays were little read; they were not at all noticed in public; and I thus escaped the perils of another premature laudation for my juvenility. I was not led to repose on the final merits either of my prototype or his imitator. The *Connoisseur*, nevertheless, gave me all the transports of a first love. His citizen at Vauxhall, who says at every mouthful of beef, "There goes twopence;" and the creed of his unbeliever, who "believes in all unbelief," competed for a long time in my mind with the humour of Goldsmith. I was also greatly delighted with the singular account of himself, in the dual number, with which he concludes his work,

shadowing forth the two authors of it in one person:—

"Mr. Town (says he) is a fair, black, middle-sized, very short person. He wears his own hair, and a periwig. He is about thirty years of age, and not more than four-and-twenty. He is a student of the law and a bachelor of physic. He was bred at the University of Oxford; where, having taken no less than three degrees, he looks down on many learned professors as his inferiors; yet, having been there but little longer than to take the first degree of bachelor of arts, it has more than once happened that the censor-general of all England has been reprimanded by the censor of his college for neglecting to furnish the usual essay, or (in the collegiate phrase) the theme of the week."

Probably these associations with school-terms, and with a juvenile time of life, gave me an additional liking for the *Connoisseur*. The two-fold author, which he thus describes himself, consisted of Bonnell Thornton, afterwards the translator of Plautus, and Colman, the dramatist, author of the *Jealous Wife*, and translator of Terence. Colman was the "very short person" of four-and-twenty, and Thornton was the bachelor of physic, though he never practised. The humour of these writers, compared with Goldsmith's, was caricature, and not deep; they had no pretensions to the genius of the *Vicar of Wakefield:* but they possessed great animal spirits, which are a sort of merit in this climate; and this was another claim on my regard. The name of Bonnell

Thornton (whom I had taken to be the sole author of the *Connoisseur*) was for a long time, with me, another term for animal spirits, humour, and wit. I then discovered that there was more smartness in him than depth; and had I known that he and Colman had ridiculed the odes of Gray, I should, perhaps, have made the discovery sooner; though I was by no means inclined to confound parody with disrespect. But the poetry of Gray had been one of my first loves; and I could as soon have thought of friendship or of the grave with levity, as of the friend of West, and the author of the *Elegy* and the *Bard*.

An amusing story is told of Thornton, which may show the quick and ingenious, but, perhaps, not very feeling turn of his mind. It is said that he was once discovered by his father sitting in a box at the theatre, when he ought to have been in his rooms at college. The old gentleman addressing him accordingly, that youngster turned in pretended amazement to the people about him, and said, "Smoke old wigsby, who takes me for his son." Thornton, senior, upon this, indignantly hastens out of the box, with the manifest intention of setting off for Oxford, and finding the rooms vacant. Thornton, junior, takes double post-horses, and is there before him, quietly sitting in his chair. He rises from it on

his father's appearance, and cries, "Ah, dear sir, is it you? To what am I indebted for this unexpected pleasure?"

Goldsmith enchanted me. I knew no end of repeating passages out of the *Essays* and the *Citizen of the World*,—such as the account of the Club, with its babel of talk; of Beau Tibbs, with his dinner of ox-cheek which "his grace was so fond of;" and of the wooden-legged sailor, who regarded those that were lucky enough to have their "legs shot off" on board king's ships (which entitled them to a penny a day), as being "born with golden spoons in their mouths." Then there was his correct, sweet style; the village-painting in his poems; the *Retaliation*, which though on an artificial subject, seemed to me (as it yet seems) a still more genuine effusion; and, above all, the *Vicar of Wakefield*,—with Burchell, whom I adored; and Moses, whom I would rather have been cheated with, than prosper; and the Vicar himself in his cassock, now presenting his "Treatise against Polygamy" (in the family picture) to his wife, habited as Venus; and now distracted for the loss of his daughter Sophia, who is seduced by the villainous baronet. I knew not whether to laugh at him, or cry with him, most.

These, with Fielding and Smollett, Voltaire, Charlotte Smith, Bage, Mrs. Radcliffe, and Augustus

La Fontaine, were my favourite prose authors. I had subscribed, while at school, to the famous circulating library in Leadenhall-street, and I have continued to be such a glutton of novels ever since, that, except where they repel me in the outset with excessive wordiness, I can read their three-volume enormities to this day without skipping a syllable; though I guess pretty nearly all that is going to happen, from the mysterious gentleman who opens the work in the dress of a particular century, down to the distribution of punishments and the drying up of tears in the last chapter. I think the authors wonderfully clever people, particularly those who write most; and I should like the most contemptuous of their critics to try their hand at doing something half as engaging.

Should any chance observer of these pages (for I look upon my customary perusers as people of deeper insight), pronounce such a course of reading frivolous, he will be exasperated to hear, that, had it not been for reverence to opinion, I should have been much inclined at that age (as, indeed, I am still) to pronounce the reading of far graver works frivolous; history, for one. I read every history that came in my way, and could not help liking good old Herodotus, ditto Villani, picturesque, festive Froissart, and accurate and most entertaining, though

artificial Gibbon. But the contradictions of historians in general, their assumption of a dignity for which I saw no particular grounds, their unphilosophic and ridiculous avoidance (on that score) of personal anecdote, and, above all, the narrow-minded and time-serving confinement of their subject to wars and party-government (for there are time-servings, as there are fashions, that last for centuries), instinctively repelled me. I felt, though I did not know, till Fielding told me, that there was more truth in the verisimilitudes of fiction than in the assumptions of history; and I rejoiced over the story told of Sir Walter Raleigh, who, on receiving I forget how many different accounts of an incident that occurred under his own windows, laughed at the idea of his writing a *History of the World.*

But the writer who made the greatest impression on me was Voltaire. I did not read French at that time, but I fell in with the best translation of some of his miscellaneous works; and I found in him not only the original of much which I had admired in the style and pleasantry of my favourite native authors, Goldsmith in particular (who adored him), but the most formidable antagonist of absurdities which the world had seen; a discloser of lights the most overwhelming, in flashes of wit; a destroyer of the

strongholds of superstition, that were never to be built up again, let the hour of renovation seem to look forth again as it might. I was transported with the gay courage and unquestionable humanity of this extraordinary person, and I soon caught the tone of his cunning implications and provoking turns. He did not frighten me. I never felt for a moment, young as I was, and Christianly brought up, that true religion would suffer at his hands. On the contrary, I had been bred up (in my home circle) to look for reforms in religion: I had been led to desire the best and gentlest form of it, unattended with threats and horrors: and if the school orthodoxy did not countenance such expectations, it took no pains to discountenance them. I had privately accustomed myself, of my own further motion, to doubt and to reject every doctrine, and every statement of facts, that went counter to the plainest precepts of love, and to the final happiness of all the creatures of God. I could never see, otherwise, what Christianity could mean, that was not meant by a hundred inferior religions; nor could I think it right and holy to accept of the greatest hopes, apart from that universality—*Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.* I was prepared to give up heaven itself (as far as it is possible for human hope to do so) rather than that anything so unheavenly as a single exclusion from it should exist.

Therefore, to me, Voltaire was a putter down of a great deal that was wrong, but of nothing that was right. I did not take him for a builder; neither did I feel that he knew much of the sanctuary which was inclosed in what he pulled down. He found a heap of rubbish pretending to be the shrine itself, and he set about denying its pretensions, and abating it as a nuisance, without knowing, or considering (at least I thought so) what there remained of beauty and durability, to be disclosed on its demolition. I fought for him, then and afterwards, with those who challenged me to the combat; and I was for some time driven to take myself for a Deist in the most ordinary sense of the word, till I had learned to know what a Christian truly was, and so arrived at opinions on religious matters in general, which I shall notice at the conclusion of these volumes.

It is a curious circumstance respecting the books of Voltaire,—the greatest writer upon the whole that France has produced, and undoubtedly the greatest name in the eighteenth century,—that to this moment they are far less known in England than talked of; so much so, that, with the exception of a few educated circles, chiefly of the upper class, and exclusively among the men even in those, he has not only been hardly read at all, even by such as

have talked of him with admiration, or loaded him with reproach, but the portions of his writings that have had the greatest effect on the world are the least known among readers the most popularly acquainted with him. The reasons of this remarkable ignorance respecting so great a neighbour,—one of the movers of the world, and an especial admirer of England,—are to be found, first, in the exclusive and timid spirit, under the guise of strength, which came up with the accession of George the Third; second, as a consequence of this spirit, a studious ignoring of the Frenchman in almost all places of education, the colleges and foundations in particular; third, the Anti-Gallican spirit which followed and exasperated the prejudice against the French Revolution; and fourth, the very translation and popularity of two of his novels, the *Candide* and *Zadig*, which, though by no means among his finest productions, had yet enough wit and peculiarity to be accepted as sufficing specimens of him, even by his admirers. Unfortunately, one of these, the *Candide*, contained some of his most licentious and even revolting writings. This enabled his enemies to adduce it as a sufficing specimen on their own side of the question; and the idea of him which they succeeded in imposing upon the English community in general, was that of a mere irreligious scoffer,

who was opposed to everything good and serious, and who did but mingle a little frivolous wit with an abundance of vexatious, hard-hearted, and disgusting effrontery.

There is, it is true, a version, purporting to be that of his whole works, by Smollett, Thomas Franklin, and others, which is understood to have been what is called a bookseller's job; but I never met with it except in an old catalogue; and I believe it was so dull and bad, that readers instinctively recoiled from it as an incredible representation of anything lively. The probability is, that Smollett only lent his name; and Franklin himself may have done as little, though the "translator of Sophocles," (as he styled himself) was well enough qualified to misrepresent any kind of genius.

Be this as it may, I have hardly ever met, even in literary circles, with persons who knew anything of Voltaire, except through the medium of these two novels, and of later school editions of his two histories of Charles the Twelfth and Peter the Great; books, which teachers of all sorts, in his own country, have been gradually compelled to admit into their courses of reading, by national pride and the imperative growth of opinion. Voltaire is one of the three great tragic writers of France, and excels in pathos; yet not one Englishman in a thousand knows a syl-

lable of his tragedies, or would do anything but stare to hear of his pathos. Voltaire inducted his countrymen into a knowledge of English science and metaphysics, nay, even of English poetry; yet Englishmen have been told little about him in connection with them, except of his disagreements with Shakspeare. Voltaire created a fashion for English thinking, manner, and policy, and fell in love with the simplicity and truthfulness of their very quakers; and yet, I will venture to say, the English knew far less of all this, than they do of a licentious poem with which he degraded his better nature in burlesquing the history of Joan of Arc.

There are, it is admitted, two sides to the character of Voltaire; one licentious, merely scoffing, saddening, defective in sentiment, and therefore wanting the inner clue of the beautiful to guide him out of the labyrinth of scorn and perplexity; all owing, be it observed, to the errors which he found prevailing in his youth, and to the impossible demands which they made on his acquiescence; but the other side of his character is moral, cheerful, beneficent, prepared to encounter peril, nay, actually encountering it in the only true Christian causes, those of toleration and charity, and raising that voice of demand for the advancement of reason and justice which is now growing into the whole voice of

Europe. He was the only man, perhaps, that ever existed, who represented in his single person the entire character, with one honourable exception (for he was never sanguinary), of the nation in which he was born; nay, of its whole history, past, present, and to come. He had the licentiousness of the old monarchy under which he was bred, the cosmopolite ardour of the revolution, the science of the consulate and the "savans," the unphilosophic love of glory of the empire, the worldly wisdom (without pushing it into folly) of Louis Philippe, and the changeful humours, the firmness, the weakness, the flourishing declamation, the sympathy with the poor, the *bonhomie*, the unbounded hopes, of the best actors in the extraordinary scenes now acting before the eyes of Europe in this present year 1850. As he himself could not construct as well as he could pull down; so neither do his countrymen, with all the goodness and greatness among them, appear to be less truly represented by him in that particular than in others; but in pulling down he had the same vague desire of the best that could set up; and when he was most thought to oppose Christianity itself, he only did it out of an impatient desire to see the law of love triumphant, and was only thought to be the adversary of its spirit, because his revilers knew nothing of it themselves.

Voltaire, in an essay written by himself in the English language, has said of Milton, in a passage which would do honour to our best writers, that when the poet saw the Adamo of Andreini at Florence, he "pierced through the absurdity of the plot to the hidden majesty of the subject." It may be said of himself, that he pierced through the conventional majesty of a great many subjects, to the hidden absurdity of the plot. He laid the axe to a heap of savage abuses; pulled the corner-stones out of dungeons and inquisitions; bowed and mocked the most tyrannical absurdities out of countenance; and raised one prodigious peal of laughter at superstition, from Naples to the Baltic. He was the first man who got the power of opinion and common sense openly recognised as a reigning authority; and who made the acknowledgment of it a point of wit and cunning, even with those who had hitherto thought they had the world to themselves.

An abridgment that I picked up of the *Philosophical Dictionary* (a translation), was for a long while my text-book, both for opinion and style. I was also a great admirer of *L'Ingenu, or the Sincere Huron*, and of the *Essay on the Philosophy of History*. In the character of the *Sincere Huron* I thought I found a resemblance to my own, as most readers do in those of their favourites: and this piece of

self-love helped me to discover as much good-heartedness in Voltaire as I discerned wit. *Candide*, I confess, I could not like. I enjoyed passages; but the laughter was not as good-humoured as usual; there was a view of things in it which I never entertained then or afterwards, and into which the author had been led, rather in order to provoke Leibnitz, than because it was natural to him; and, to crown my unwilling dislike, the book had a coarseness, apart from graceful and pleasurable ideas, which I have never been able to endure. There were passages in the abridgment of the *Philosophical Dictionary* which I always passed over; but the rest delighted me beyond measure. I can repeat things out of it now, and will lay two or three of the points before the reader, as specimens of what made such an impression upon me. They are in Voltaire's best manner; which consists in an artful intermixture of the conventional dignity and real absurdity of what he is exposing, the tone being as grave as the dignity seems to require, and the absurdity coming out as if unintentionally.

Speaking of the *Song of Solomon* (of which, by-the-way, his criticism is very far from being in the right, though he puts it so pleasantly), he thinks he has the royal lover at a disadvantage with his comparisons of noses to towers, and eyes to fishpools;

and then concludes with observing, "All this, it must be confessed, is not in the taste of the Latin poets; *but then a Jew is not obliged to write like Virgil.*" Now, it would not be difficult to show that Eastern and Western poetry had better be two things than one; or, at least, that they have a right to be so, and can lay claim to their own beauties; but, at the same time, it is impossible to help laughing at this pretended admission *in Solomon's favour*, and the cunning introduction of the phrase "*a Jew*," contrasted with the dignity of the name of Virgil.

In another part of the same article on Solomon, where he speaks of the many thousands of chariots which the Jewish monarch possessed (a quantity that certainly have a miraculous appearance, though, perhaps, explainable by a good scholar), he says he cannot conceive, for the life of him, what Solomon did with such a multitude of carriages, "unless," adds he, "it was to take *the ladies of his seraglio* an airing on the borders of the lake Genesareth, or along the brook Cedron; a charming spot, *except* that it is dry nine months in the year, *and the ground a little stony.*" At these passages I used to roll with laughter; and I cannot help laughing now, writing as I am, alone by my fireside. They tell nothing, except against those who confound everything the most indifferent, relating to the great men of the

Bible, with something sacred; and who have thus done more harm to their own distinctions of sacred and profane, than all which has been charged on the ridicule they occasion.

The last quotation shall be from the admirable article on *War* which made a profound impression on me. You cannot help laughing at it: the humour is high and triumphant; but the laugh ends in very serious reflections on the nature of war, and on the very doubtful morality of those who make no scruple, when it suits them, of advocating the infliction of calamity in some things, while they protest against the least hazard of it in others. Voltaire notices the false and frivolous pretensions upon which princes subject their respective countries to the miseries of war, purely to oblige their own cupidity and ambition. One of them, he says, finds in some old document a claim or pretence of some relation of his to some piece of land in the possession of another. He gives the other notice of his claim; the other will not hear of it: so the prince in question "picks up a great many men, who have nothing to do and nothing to lose; *binds their hats with coarse white worsted, five sous to the ell;* turns them to the right and left; *and marches away with them to glory.*" Now, the glory and the white worsted, the potentate who is to have an addition to his coffers, and the

poor soul who is to be garnished for it with a halo of bobbin, "five sous to the ell," here come into admirable contrast. War may be necessary on some occasions, till a wiser remedy be found; and ignoble causes may bring into play very noble passions; but it is desirable that the world should take the necessity of no existing system for granted, which is accompanied with horrible evils. This is a lesson which Voltaire has taught us; and it is invaluable. Our author terminates his ridicule on War with a sudden and startling apostrophe to an eminent preacher on a very different subject. The familiar tone of the reproof is very pleasant. "Bourdaloue, a very bad sermon have you made against love; against that passion which consoles and restores the human race; but not a word, bad or good, have you said against this passion that tears us to pieces." (I quote from memory, and am not sure of my words in this extract; but the spirit of them is the same.) He adds, that all the miseries ever produced in the world by love, do not come up to the calamities occasioned by a single campaign. If he means love in the abstract, unconnected with the systems by which it has been regulated in different parts of the world, he is probably in the right; but the miscalculation is enormous, if he includes those. The ninety-six thousand prostitutes alone in the streets

of London, which we are told are the inevitable accompaniment, and even safeguard, of the virtuous part of our system (to say nothing of the tempers, the jealousies, the chagrins, the falsehoods, the quarrels, and the repeated murders which afflict and astonish us even in that), most probably experience more bitterness of heart, every day of their lives, than is caused by any one campaign, however wild and flagitious.

Besides Voltaire and the *Connoisseur*, I was very fond at that time of *Johnson's Lives of the Poets*, and a great reader of Pope. My admiration of the *Rape of the Lock* led me to write a long mock-heroic poem, entitled the *Battle of the Bridal Ring*, the subject of which was a contest between two rival orders of spirits, on whom to bestow a lady in marriage. I venture to say, that it would have been well spoken of by the critics, and was not worth a penny. I recollect one couplet, which will serve to show how I mimicked the tone of my author. It was an apostrophe to Mantua,—

> "Mantua, of great and small the long renown,
> That now a Virgil giv'st, and now a gown."

Dryden I read, too, but not with that relish for his nobler versification which I afterwards acquired. To dramatic reading, with all my love of the theatre, I

have already mentioned my disinclination; yet, in the interval of my departure from school, and my getting out of my teens, I wrote two farces, a comedy, and a tragedy; and the plots of all (such as they were) were inventions. The hero of my tragedy was the *Earl of Surrey* (Howard, the poet), who was put to death by Henry the Eighth. I forget what the comedy was upon. The title of one of the farces was the *Beau Miser*, which may explain the nature of it. The other was called *A Hundred a Year*, and turned upon a hater of the country, who, upon having an annuity to that amount given him, on condition of his never going out of London, becomes a hater of the town. In the last scene, his annuity died a jovial death in a country tavern; the bestower entering the room just as my hero had got on a table, with a glass in his hand, to drink confusion to the metropolis. All these pieces were, I doubt not, as bad as need be. About thirty years ago, being sleepless one night with a fit of enthusiasm, in consequence of reading about the Spanish play of the *Cid*, in Lord Holland's *Life of Guillen de Castro*, I determined to write a tragedy on the same subject, which was accepted at Drury-lane. Perhaps the conduct of this piece was not without merit, the conclusion of each act throwing the interest into the succeeding one: but I had great doubts of all

the rest of it; and on receiving it from Mr. Elliston to make an alteration in the third act, very judiciously proposed by him, I looked the whole of the play over again, and convinced myself it was unfit for the stage. I therefore withheld it. I had painted my hero too after the beau-ideal of a modern reformer, instead of the half-godlike, half-bigoted soldier that he was. I began afterwards to re-cast the play, but grew tired and gave it up. The *Cid* would make a delicious character for the stage, or in any work; not, indeed, as Corneille declaimed him, nor as inferior writers might adapt him to the reigning taste; but taken, I mean, as he was, with the noble impulses he received from nature, the drawbacks with which a bigoted age qualified them, and the social and open-hearted pleasantry (not the least evidence of his nobleness) which brings forth his heart, as it were, in flashes through the stern armour. But this would require a strong hand, and readers capable of grappling with it. In the mean time, they should read of him in Mr. Southey's *Chronicle of the Cid* (an admirable summary from the old Spanish writers), and in the delightful verses at the end of it, translated from an old Spanish poem by Mr. Hookham Frere, with a triumphant force and fidelity, that you know to be true to the original at once.

About the period of my writing the above essays, circumstances introduced me to the acquaintance of Mr. Bell, the proprietor of the *Weekly Messenger*. In his house in the Strand I used to hear of politics and dramatic criticism, and of the persons who wrote them. Mr. Bell had been well known as a bookseller, and a speculator in elegant typography. It is to him the public are indebted for the small edition of the Poets that preceded Cooke's, and which, with all my predilections for that work, was unquestionably superior to it. Besides, it included Chaucer and Spenser. The omission of these in Cooke's edition was as unpoetical a sign of the times, as the present familiarity with their names is the reverse. It was thought a mark of good sense:—as if good sense, in matters of literature, did not consist as much in knowing what was poetical in poetry, as brilliant in wit. Bell was upon the whole a remarkable person. He was a plain man, with a red face, and a nose exaggerated by intemperance; and yet there was something not unpleasing in his countenance, especially when he spoke. He had sparkling black eyes, a good-natured smile, gentlemanly manners, and one of the most agreeable voices I ever heard. He had no acquirements, perhaps not even grammar; but his taste in putting forth a publication, and getting the best artists to adorn

it, was new in those times, and may be admired in any; and the same taste was observable in his house. He knew nothing of poetry. He thought the *Della Cruscans* fine people, because they were known in the circles; and for Milton's *Paradise Lost* he had the same epithet as for Mrs. Crouch's face, or the phaeton of Major Topham: he thought it "pretty." Yet a certain liberal instinct, and turn for large dealing, made him include Chaucer and Spenser in his edition; he got Stothard to adorn the one, and Mortimer the other; and in the midst, I suspect, of very equivocal returns, published a *British Theatre*, with embellishments, and a similar edition of the plays of Shakspeare,—the incorrectest work, according to Mr. Chalmers, that ever issued from the press.

Unfortunately for Mr. Bell, he had as great a taste for neat wines and ankles as for pretty books; and, to crown his misfortunes, the Prince of Wales, to whom he was bookseller, once did him the honour to partake of an entertainment at his house. He afterwards became a bankrupt. He was one of those men whose temperament and turn for enjoyment throw a sort of grace over whatsoever they do, standing them in stead of everything but prudence, and sometimes even supplying them with the consolations which imprudence itself has forfeited.

After his bankruptcy he set up a newspaper, which became profitable to everybody but himself. He had become so used to lawyers and bailiffs, that the more his concerns flourished, the more his debts flourished with them. It seemed as if he would have been too happy without them; too exempt from the cares that beset the prudent. The first time I saw him he was standing in a chemist's shop, waiting till the road was clear for him to issue forth. He had a toothache, for which he held a handkerchief over his mouth; and, while he kept a sharp look-out with his bright eye, was alternately groaning in a most gentlemanly manner over his gums, and addressing some polite words to the shopman. I had not then been introduced to him, and did not know his person; so that the effect of his voice upon me was unequivocal. I liked him for it, and wished the bailiff at the devil.*

* An intelligent compositor (Mr. J. P. S. Bicknell), who has been a noter of curious passages in his time, informs me, that Bell was the first printer who confined the small letter *s* to its present shape, and rejected altogether the older form, *ſ*. He tells me, that this innovation, besides the handsomer form of the new letter, was "a boon to both master-printers and the compositor, inasmuch as it lessened the amount of capital necessary to be laid out under the old system, and saved to the workman no small portion of his valuable time and labour."

My informant adds, as a curious instance of conservative tendency on small points, that Messrs. Rivington having got as

In the office of the *Weekly Messenger*, I saw one day a person who looked the epitome of squalid authorship. He was wretchedly dressed and dirty; and the rain, as he took his hat off, came away from it as from a spout. This was a man of the name of Badini, who had been poet at the Opera, and was then editor of the *Messenger*. He was afterwards sent out of the country under the Alien Act, and became reader of the English papers to Bonaparte. His intimacy with some of the first families in the country, among whom he had been a teacher, is supposed to have been of use to the French government. He wrote a good idiomatic English style, and was a man of abilities. I had never before seen a *poor author*, such as are described in books; and the spectacle of the reality startled me. Like most authors, however, who are at once very poor and very clever, his poverty was his own fault. When he received any money he disappeared, and was

far as three sheets, on a work of a late Bishop of Durham, in which the new plan was adopted, the Bishop sent back the sheets, in order to have the old letter restored, which compelled the booksellers to get a new supply from the type-foundry, the font containing the venerable ſ having been thrown away.

Mr. Bicknell also informs me, that when Bell set up his newspaper, the *Weekly Messenger* (which had a wood-cut at the top of it, of a newsman blowing his horn), he is said to have gone to a masquerade in the newsman's character, and distributed prospectuses to the company.

understood to spend it in alehouses. We heard that in Paris he kept his carriage. I have since met with authors of the same squalid description; but they were destitute of ability, and had no more right to profess literature as a trade than alchemy. It is from these that the common notions about the poverty of the tribe are taken. One of them, poor fellow! might have cut a figure in Smollett. He was a proper ideal author, in rusty black, out at elbows, thin and pale. He brought me an ode about an eagle; for which the publisher of a magazine, he said, had had "the inhumanity" to offer him half a crown. His necessity for money he did not deny; but his great anxiety was to know whether, as a poetical composition, his ode was not worth more. "Is that *poetry*, sir?" cried he: "that 's what I want to know—is that *poetry?*", rising from his chair, and staring and trembling in all the agony of contested excellence.

My brother John, at the beginning of the year 1805, set up a paper, called the *News*, and I went to live with him in Brydges-street, and write the theatricals in it.

It was the custom at that time for editors of papers to be intimate with actors and dramatists. They were often proprietors, as well as editors; and, in that case, it was not expected that they

should escape the usual intercourse, or wish to do so. It was thought a feather in the cap of all parties; and with their feathers they tickled one another. The newspaper man had consequence in the green-room, and plenty of tickets for his friends; and he dined at amusing tables. The dramatist secured a good-natured critique in his journal, sometimes got it written himself, or, according to Mr. Reynolds, was even himself the author of it. The actor, if he was of any eminence, stood upon the same ground of reciprocity; and not to know a pretty actress would have been a want of the knowing in general. Upon new performers, and upon writers not yet introduced, a journalist was more impartial; and sometimes, where the proprietor was in one interest more than another, or for some personal reason grew offended with an actor, or set of actors, a criticism would occasionally be hostile, and even severe. An editor, too, would now and then suggest to his employer the policy of exercising a freer authority, and obtain influence enough with him to show symptoms of it. I believe Bell's editor, who was more clever, was also more impartial than most critics; though the publisher of the *British Theatre*, and patron of the *Della Cruscans*, must have been hampered with literary intimacies. The best chance for an editor, who wished

to have anything like an opinion of his own, was the appearance of a rival newspaper with a strong theatrical connection. Influence was here threatened with diminution. It was to be held up on other grounds; and the critic was permitted to find out that a bad play was not good, or an actress's petticoat of the lawful dimensions.

Puffing and plenty of tickets were, however, the system of the day. It was an interchange of amenities over the dinner-table; a flattery of power on the one side, and puns on the other; and what the public took for a criticism on a play, was a draft upon the box-office, or reminiscences of last Thursday's salmon and lobster-sauce. The custom was, to write as short and as favourable a paragraph on the new piece as could be; to say that Bannister was "excellent" and Mrs. Jordan "charming"; to notice the "crowded house," or invent it, if necessary; and to conclude by observing, that "the whole went off with *éclat*." For the rest, it was a critical religion in those times to admire Mr. Kemble: and at the period in question Master Betty had appeared, and been hugged to the hearts of the town as the young Roscius.

We saw that independence in theatrical criticism would be a great novelty. We announced it, and nobody believed us: we stuck to it, and the town

believed everything we said. The proprietors of the *News*, of whom I knew so little that I cannot recollect with certainty any one of them, very handsomely left me to myself. My retired and scholastic habits kept me so; and the pride of success confirmed my independence with regard to others. I was then in my twentieth year, an early age at that time for a writer. The usual exaggeration of report made me younger than I was: and after being a "young Roscius" political, I was now looked upon as one critical. To know an actor personally appeared to me a vice not to be thought of; and I would as lief have taken poison as accepted a ticket from the theatres.

Good God! To think of the grand opinion I had of myself in those days, and what little reason I had for it! Not to accept the tickets was very proper, considering that I bestowed more blame than praise. There was also more good-nature than I supposed in not allowing myself to know any actors; but the vanity of my position had greater weight with me than anything else, and I must have proved it to discerning eyes by the small quantity of information I brought to my task, and the ostentation with which I produced it. I knew almost as little of the drama, as the young Roscius himself. Luckily, I had the advantage of him in knowing how unfit

he was for his office; and, probably, he thought me as much so, though he could not have argued upon it; for I was in the minority respecting his merits, and the balance was then trembling on the beam; the *News*, I believe, hastened the settlement of the question. I wish with all my heart we had let him alone, and he had got a little more money. However, he obtained enough to create him a provision for life. His position, which appeared so brilliant at first, had a remarkable cruelty in it. Most men begin life with struggles, and have their vanity sufficiently knocked about the head and shoulders to make their kinder fortunes the more welcome. Mr. Betty had his sugar first, and his physic afterwards. He began life with a double childhood, with a new and extraordinary felicity added to the natural enjoyments of his age; and he lived to see it speedily come to nothing, and to be taken for an ordinary person. I am told that he acquiesces in his fate, and agrees that the town were mistaken. If so, he is no ordinary person still, and has as much right to our respect for his good sense, as he is declared on all hands to deserve it for his amiableness. I have an anecdote of him to both purposes, which exhibits him in a very agreeable light. Hazlitt happened to be at a party where Mr. Betty was present; and in coming away, when they were all putting on their

great-coats, the critic thought fit to compliment the dethroned favourite of the town, by telling him that he recollected him in old times, and had been "much pleased with him." Betty looked at his memorialist, as much as to say, "You don't tell me so!" and then starting into a tragical attitude, exclaimed, "Oh, memory! memory!"

I was right about Master Betty, and I am sorry for it; though the town was in fault, not he. I think I was right also about Kemble; but I have no regret upon that score. He flourished long enough after my attacks on his majestic dryness and deliberate nothings; and Kean would have taken the public by storm, whether they had been prepared for him or not:

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

Kemble faded before him, like a tragedy ghost. I never denied the merits which that actor possessed. He had the look of a Roman; made a very good ideal, though not a very real Coriolanus, for his pride was not sufficiently blunt and unaffected: and in parts that suited his natural deficiency, such as Penruddock and the Abbé de l'Epée, would have been altogether admirable and interesting, if you could have forgotten, that their sensibility, in his hands, was not so much repressed, as wanting. He was no more to be compared to his sister, than stone

is to flesh and blood. There was much of the pedagogue in him. He made a fuss about trifles; was inflexible on a pedantic reading: in short, was rather a teacher of elocution than an actor; and not a good teacher, on that account. There was a merit in his idealism, as far as it went. He had, at least, faith in something classical and scholastic, and he made the town partake of it; but it was all on the surface —a hollow trophy: and I am persuaded, that he had no idea in his head but of a stage Roman, and the dignity he added to his profession.

But if I was right about Kemble, whose admirers I plagued enough, I was not equally so about the living dramatists, whom I plagued more. I laid all the deficiencies of the modern drama to their account, and treated them like a parcel of mischievous boys, of whom I was the schoolmaster and whipper-in. I forgot that it was I who was the boy, and that they knew twenty times more of the world than I did. Not that I mean to say their comedies were excellent, or that my commonplaces about the superior merits of Congreve and Sheridan were not well founded; but there was more talent in their "five-act farces" than I supposed; and I mistook, in great measure, the defect of the age—its dearth of dramatic character—for that of the writers who were to draw upon it. It is true, a great

wit, by a laborious process, and the help of his acquirements, might extract a play or two from it, as was Sheridan's own case; but there was a great deal of imitation even in Sheridan, and he was fain to help himself to a little originality out of the characters of his less formalized countrymen, his own included.

It is remarkable, that the three most amusing dramatists of the last age, Sheridan, Goldsmith, and O'Keeffe, were all Irishmen, and all had characters of their own. Sheridan, after all, was Swift's Sheridan come to life again in the person of his grandson, with the oratory of Thomas Sheridan, the father, superadded and brought to bear. Goldsmith, at a disadvantage in his breeding, but full of address with his pen, drew upon his own absurdities and mistakes, and filled his dramas with ludicrous perplexity. O'Keeffe was all for whim and impulse, but not without a good deal of conscience; and, accordingly, in his plays we have a sort of young and pastoral taste of life in the very midst of its sophistications. Animal spirits, quips and cranks, credulity, and good intention, are triumphant throughout, and make a delicious mixture. It is a great credit to O'Keeffe, that he ran sometimes close upon the borders of the sentimental drama, and did it not only with impunity but advantage; but sprightliness

and sincerity enable a man to do everything with advantage.

It was a pity that as much could not be said of Mr. Colman, who, after taking more license in his writings than anybody, became a licenser *ex officio*, and seemed inclined to license nothing but cant. When this writer got into the sentimental, he made a sad business of it, for he had no faith in sentiment. He mouthed and overdid it, as a man does when he is telling a lie. At a farce he was admirable; and he remained so to the last, whether writing or licensing.

Morton seemed to take a colour from the writers all round him, especially from O'Keeffe and the sentimentalists. His sentiment was more in earnest than Colman's, yet, somehow, not happy either. There was a gloom in it, and a smack of the Old Bailey. It was best when he put it in a shape of humour, as in the paternal and inextinguishable *tailorism* of Old Rapid, in a *Cure for the Heart-Ache*. Young Rapid, who complains that his father "sleeps so slow," is also a pleasant fellow, and worthy of O'Keeffe. He is one of the numerous crop that sprang up from *Wild Oats*, but not in so natural a soil.

The character of the modern drama at that time was singularly commercial; nothing but gentlemen

in distress, and hard landlords, and generous interferers, and fathers who got a great deal of money, and sons who spent it. I remember one play in particular, in which the whole wit ran upon prices, bonds, and post-obits. You might know what the pit thought of their pound notes by the ostentatious indifference with which the heroes of the pieces gave them away, and the admiration and pretended approval with which the spectators observed it. To make a present of a hundred pounds was as if a man had uprooted and given away an Egyptian pyramid.

Mr. Reynolds was not behindhand with his brother dramatists in drawing upon the taste of the day for gains and distresses. It appears by his Memoirs, that he had too much reason for so doing. He was, perhaps, the least ambitious, and the least vain (whatever charges to the contrary his animal spirits might have brought on him), of all the writers of that period. In complexional vivacity he certainly did not yield to any of them; his comedies, if they were fugitive, were genuine representations of fugitive manners, and went merrily to their death; and there is one of them, the *Dramatist*, founded upon something more lasting, which promises to remain in the collections, and deserves it: which is not a little to say of any writer. I never wish for a heartier

laugh than I have enjoyed, since I grew wiser, not only in seeing, but in reading the vagaries of his dramatic hero, and his mystifications of "Old Scratch." When I read the good-humoured Memoirs of this writer the other day, I felt quite ashamed of the ignorant and boyish way in which I used to sit in judgment upon his faults, without being aware of what was good in him; and my repentance was increased by the very proper manner in which he speaks of his critics, neither denying the truth of their charges in letter, nor admitting them altogether in spirit; in fact, showing that he knew very well what he was about, and that they, whatsoever they fancied to the contrary, did not.

Mr. Reynolds, agreeably to his sense and good-humour, never said a word to his critics at the time. Mr. Thomas Dibdin, not quite so wise, wrote me a letter, which Incledon, I am told, remonstrated with him for sending, saying, it would do him no good with the "d——d boy." And he was right. I published it, with an answer, and only thought that I made dramatists "come bow to me." Mr. Colman attacked me in a prologue, which, by a curious chance, Fawcett spoke right in my teeth, the box I sat in happening to be directly opposite him. I laughed at the prologue; and only looked upon Mr. Colman as a great monkey pelting me

with nuts, which I ate. Attacks of this kind were little calculated to obtain their end with a youth who persuaded himself that he wrote for nothing but the public good; who mistook the impression which anybody of moderate talents can make with a newspaper, for the result of something peculiarly his own; and who had just enough scholarship to despise the want of it in others. I do not pretend to think that the criticisms in the *News* had no merit at all. They showed an acquaintance with the style of Voltaire, Johnson, and others; were not unagreeably sprinkled with quotation; and, above all, were written with more care and attention than was customary with newspapers at that time. The pains I took to round a period with nothing in it, or to invent a simile that should appear off-hand, would have done honour to better stuff.

A portion of these criticisms subsequently formed the appendix of an original volume on the same subject, entitled *Critical Essays on the Performers of the London Theatres.* I have the book now before me; and if I thought it had a chance of survival, I should regret and qualify a good deal of uninformed judgment in it respecting the art of acting, which, with much inconsistent recommendation to the contrary, it too often confounded with a literal, instead of a liberal imitation of nature. I particularly

erred with respect to comedians like Munden, whose superabundance of humour and expression I confounded with farce and buffoonery. Charles Lamb taught me better.

There was a good deal of truth, however, mixed up with these mistakes. One of the things on which I was always harping, was Kemble's vicious pronunciation. Kemble had a smattering of learning, and a great deal of obstinacy. He was a reader of old books; and having discovered that pronunciation had not always been what it was, and that in one or two instances the older was metrically better than the new (as in the case of the word *aches*, which was originally a dissyllable—*aitches*), he took upon him to reform it in a variety of cases, where propriety was as much against him as custom. Thus the vowel *e* in the word "merchant," in defiance of its Latin etymology, he insisted upon pronouncing according to its French derivative, *marchant*. "Innocent" he called *innocint*; "conscience" (in defiance even of his friend Chaucer), *conshince*; "virtue," in proper slip-slop, *varchue*; "fierce," *furse*; "beard," *bird*; "thy," *thĕ* (because we generally call "my," *mĕ*); and "odious," "hideous," and "perfidious," became *ojus*, *hijjus*, and *perfijjus*.

Nor were these all. The following banter, in the shape of an imaginary bit of conversation between

an officer and his friend was, literally, no caricature:—

A. Ha! captain! How dos? (1) *The* appearance would be much improved by a little mor: attention to *the* (2) *bird.*

B. Why, so I think: there's no (3) *sentimint* in a *bird.* But then it serves to distinguish a soldier, and there is no doubt much military (4) *varchue* in looking (5) *furful.*

A. But, the girls, Jack, the girls! Why, *the* mouth is enough to banish kissing from the (6) *airth* (7) *etairnally.*

B. In (8) *maircy*, no more of that! Zounds, but the shopkeepers and the (9) *marchants* will get the better of us with the dear souls! However, as it is now against military law to have a tender countenance, and as some *birds*, I thank heaven, are of a tolerable (10) *qual-ity*, I must make a *varchue* of necessity; and as I can't look soft for the love of my girl, I must e'en look (11) *hijjus* for the love of my country."

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(1) thy; (2) beard; (3) sentiment; (4) virtue; (5) fearful; (6) earth; (7) eternally; (8) mercy; (9) merchants; (10) quality (with the *a* as in *universality*); (11) hideous.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUFFERING AND REFLECTION.

Nervous illness and conclusions therefrom. — Mystery of the universe. — Hypochondriacal recreations. — A hundred and fifty rhymes on a trissyllable. — Pastoral innocence. — A didactic yeoman. — "Hideous sight" of Dr. Young. — Action the cure for sedentary ailments. — Boating; a fray on the Thames. — Magical effect of the word "Law." — Return of health and enjoyment.

But the gay and confident spirit in which I began this critical career received a check, of which none of my friends suspected the anguish, and very few were told. I fell into a melancholy state of mind, produced by ill health.

I thought it was owing to living too well; and as I had great faith in temperance, I went to the reverse extreme; not considering, that temperance implies moderation in self-denial, as well as in self-indulgence. The consequence was a nervous condition amounting to hypochondria, which lasted me several months. I experienced it twice afterwards, each time more painfully than before, and for a much longer period; but I have never had it since;

and I am of opinion that I need not have had it at all, had I gone at once to a physician, and not repeated the mistake of being over abstinent.

I mention the whole circumstance for the benefit of others. The first attack came on me with palpitations of the heart. These I got rid of by horseback. I forget what symptoms attended the approach of the second. The third was produced by sitting out of doors too early in the spring. I attempted to outstarve them all, but egregiously failed. In one instance, I took wholly to a vegetable diet, which made me so weak and giddy, that I was forced to catch hold of rails in the streets to hinder myself from falling. In another, I confined myself for some weeks to a milk diet, which did nothing but jaundice my complexion. In the third, I took a modicum of meat, one glass of wine, no milk except in tea, and no vegetables at all; but though I did not suffer quite so much mental distress from this regimen as from the milk, I suffered more than from the vegetables, and for a much longer period than with either. To be sure, I continued it longer; and, perhaps, it gave me greater powers of endurance; but for upwards of four years, without intermission, and above six years in all, I underwent a burden of wretchedness, which I afterwards felt convinced I need not have endured for as many

weeks, perhaps not as many days, had I not absurdly taken to the extreme I spoke of in the first instance, and then as absurdly persisted in seeking no advice, partly from fear of hearing worse things foretold me, and partly from a hope of wearing out the calamity by patience. At no time did my friends guess to what amount I suffered. They saw that my health was bad enough, and they condoled with me accordingly; but cheerful habits enabled me to retain an air of cheerfulness, except when I was alone; and I never spoke of it but once, which was to my friend Mitchell, whom I guessed to have undergone something of the kind.

And what was it that I suffered? and on what account? On no account. On none whatsoever, except my ridiculous super-abstinence, and my equally ridiculous avoidance of speaking about it. The very fact of having no cause whatsoever, was the thing that most frightened me. I thought that if I had but a cause, the cause might have been removed or palliated; but to be haunted by a ghost which was not even ghostly, which was something I never saw, or could even imagine, this, I thought, was the most terrible thing that could befal me. I could see no end to the persecutions of an enemy, who was neither visible nor even existing!

Causes for suffering, however, came. Not, in-

deed, the worst, for I was neither culpable nor superstitious. I had wronged nobody; and I now felt the inestimable benefit of having had cheerful opinions given me in religion. But I plagued myself with things which are the pastimes of better states of health, and the pursuits of philosophers. I mooted with myself every point of metaphysics which could get into a head into which they had never been put. I made a cause of causes for anxiety, by inquiring into causation, and outdid the Vicar of Wakefield's Moses, in being my own Sanchoniathan and Berosus on the subject of the cosmogony! I jest about it now; but, oh! what pain was it to me then! and what pangs of biliary will and impossibility I underwent in the endeavour to solve these riddles of the universe! I felt, long before I knew Mr. Wordsworth's poetry,—

> "the burthen and the mystery
> Of all this unintelligible world."

I reverence the mystery still, but I no longer feel the burden, because for these five-and-thirty years I have known how to adjust my shoulders to it by taking care of my health. I should rather say because healthy shoulders have no such burden to carry. The elements of existence, like the air which we breathe, and which would otherwise crush us, are so

nicely proportioned to one another within and around them, that we are unconsciously sustained by them, not thoughtfully oppressed.

One great benefit, however, resulted to me from this suffering. It gave me an amount of reflection such as in all probability I never should have had without it; and if readers have derived any good from the graver portion of my writings, I attribute it to this experience of evil. It taught me patience; it taught me charity (however imperfectly I may have exercised either); it taught me charity even towards myself; it taught me the worth of little pleasures, as well as the dignity and utility of great pains; it taught me that evil itself contained good; nay, it taught me to doubt whether any such thing as evil, considered in itself, existed; whether things altogether, as far as our planet knows them, could have been so good without it; whether the desire, nevertheless, which nature has implanted in us for its destruction, be not the signal and the means to that end; and whether its destruction, finally, will not prove its existence, in the mean time, to have been necessary to the very bliss that supersedes it.

I have been thus circumstantial respecting this illness, or series of illnesses, in the hope that such readers as have not had experience or reflection enough of their own to dispense with the lesson,

may draw the following conclusions from sufferings of all kinds, if they happen to need it:—

First,—That however any suffering may seem to be purely mental, body alone may occasion it; which was undoubtedly the case in my instance.

Second,—That as human beings do not originate their own bodies or minds, and as yet very imperfectly know how to manage them, they have a right to all the aid or comfort they can procure, under any sufferings whatsoever.

Third,—That whether it be the mind or body that is ailing, or both, they may save themselves a world of perplexity and of illness by going at once to a physician.

Fourth,—That till they do so, or in case they are unable to do it, a recourse to the first principles of health is their only wise proceeding; by which principles I understand air and exercise, bathing, amusements, and whatsoever else tends to enliven and purify the blood.

Fifth,—That the blackest day may have a bright morrow; for my last and worst illness suddenly left me, probably in consequence of the removal, though unconsciously, of some internal obstruction; and it is now for the long period above mentioned that I have not had the slightest return of it, though I have had many anxieties to endure, and a great deal of sickness.

Sixth,—That the far greater portion of a life thus tried may nevertheless be remarkable for cheerfulness; which has been the case with my own.

Seventh,—That the value of cheerful opinions is inestimable; that they will return a sort of heaven round a man, when everything else might fail him; and that, consequently, they ought to be sedulously inculcated in children.

Eighth and last,—That evil itself has its bright, or at any rate its redeeming side; probably is but the fugitive requisite of some everlasting good; and assuredly, in the mean time, and in a thousand obvious instances, is the admonisher, the producer, the increaser, nay, the very adorner and splendid investitor of good; it is the pain that prevents a worse, the storm that diffuses health, the plague that enlarges cities, the fatigue that sweetens sleep, the discord that enriches harmonies, the calamity that tests affections, the victory and the crown of patience, the enrapturer of the embraces of joy.

I was reminded of the circumstance which gave rise to these reflections, by the mention of the friend of whom I spoke last, and another brother of whom I went to see during my first illness. He was a young and amiable artist, residing at Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. He had no conception of what I suffered; and one of his modes of entertaining me

was his taking me to a friend of his, a surgeon, to see his anatomical preparations, and delight my hypochondriacal eyes with grinnings of skulls and delicacies of injected hearts. I have no more horror now, on reflection, of those frameworks and machineries of the beautiful body in which we live, than I have of the jacks and wires of a harpsichord. The first sight revolts us simply because life dislikes death, and the human being is jarred out of a sense of its integrity by these bits and scraps of the material portion of it. But I know it is no more *me*, than it is the feeling which revolts from it, or than the harpsichord itself is the music that Haydn or Beethoven put into it. Indeed, I did not think otherwise at the time, with the healthier part of me; nor did this healthier part ever forsake me. I always attributed what I felt to bodily ailment, and talked as reasonably, and for the most part as cheerfully, with my friends as usual, nor did I ever once gainsay the cheerfulness and hopefulness of my opinions. But I could not look comfortably on the bones and the skulls nevertheless, though I made a point of sustaining the exhibition. I bore anything that came, in order that I might be overborne by nothing; and I found this practice of patience very useful. I also took part in every diversion, and went into as many different places and new scenes as possible;

which reminds me that I once rode with my Lincolnshire friend from Gainsborough to Doncaster, and that he and I, sick and serious as I was, or rather because I was sick and serious (for such extremes meet, and melancholy has a good-natured sister in mirth) made, in the course of our journey, a hundred and fifty rhymes on the word "philosopher." We stopped at that number, only because we had come to our journey's end. I shall not apologize to the reader for mentioning this boy's play, because I take every reader who feels an interest in this book to be a bit of a philosopher himself, and therefore prepared to know that boy's play and man's play are much oftener identical than people suppose, especially when the heart has need of the pastime. I need not remind him of the sage, who while playing with a parcel of schoolboys suddenly stopped at the approach of a solemn personage, and said, "We must leave off, boys, at present, for here's a fool coming."

The number of rhymes might be a little more surprising; but the wonder will cease when the reader considers that they must have been doggerel, and that there is no end to the forms in which rhymes can set off from new given points; as, *go* so far, *throw* so far; *nose* of her, *beaux* of her; *toss* of her, *cross* of her, &c.

Spirits of Swift and Butler! come to my aid, if any chance reader, not of our right reading fashion, happen to light upon this passage, and be inclined to throw down the book. Come to *his* aid; for he does not know what he is going to do;—how many illustrious jingles he is about to vituperate.

The surgeon I speak of was good enough one day to take me with him round the country, to visit his patients. I was startled in a respectable farm-house to hear language openly talked in a mixed party of males and females, of a kind that seldom courts publicity, and that would have struck with astonishment an eulogizer of pastoral innocence. Yet nobody seemed surprised at it; nor did it bring a blush on the cheek of a very nice, modest-looking girl. She only smiled, and seemed to think it was the man's way. Probably it was nothing more than the language which was spoken in the first circles in times of old, and which thus survived among the peasantry, just as we find them retaining words that have grown obsolete in cities. The guilt and innocence of manners very much depend on conventional agreement; that is to say, on what is thought of them with respect to practice, and to the harm or otherwise which they are actually found to produce. The very dress which would be shameless in one age or country, is respectable in another; but in

neither case is it a moral test. When the shame goes in one respect, it by no means comes in another; otherwise all Turks would be saints, and all Europeans sinners. The minds of the people in the Lincolnshire farm-house were "naked and not ashamed." It must be owned, however, that there was an amount of consciousness about them, which savoured more of a pagan than a paradisaical state of innocence.

One of this gentleman's patients was very amusing. He was a pompous old gentleman-farmer, cultivating his gout on two chairs, and laying down the law on the state of the nation. Lord Eldon he called "my Lord *Eljin*" (Elgin); and he showed us what an ignorant man this chancellor was, and what a dreadful thing such want of knowledge was for the country. The proof of his own fitness for setting things right, was thus given by his making three mistakes in one word. He took Lord Eldon for Lord Elgin; he took Lord Elgin for the Chancellor; and he pronounced his lordship's name with a soft *g* instead of a hard one. His medical friend was of course not bound to cure his spelling as well as his gout; so we left him in the full-blown satisfaction of having struck awe on the Londoner.

Dr. Young talks of—

"That hideous sight, a naked human heart;

a line not fit to have been written by a human being. The sight of the physical heart, it must be owned, was trying enough to sick eyes; that of the Doctor's moral heart, according to himself, would have been far worse. I don't believe it. I don't believe he had a right thus to calumniate it, much less that of his neighbour, and of the whole human race.

I saw a worse sight than the heart, in a journey which I took into a neighbouring county. It was an infant, all over sores, and cased in steel; the result of the irregularities of its father; and I confess that I would rather have seen the heart of the very father of that child, than I would the child himself. I am sure it must have bled at the sight. I am sure there would have been a feeling of some sort to vindicate nature, granting that up to that moment the man had been a fool or even a scoundrel. Sullenness itself would have been some amends; some sort of confession and regret. As to the poor child, let us trust that the horrible spectacle prevented more such; that he was a martyr, dying soon, and going to some heaven where little souls are gathered into comfort. I never beheld such a sight, before or since, except in one of the pictures of Hogarth, in his Rake's Progress; and I sadden this page with the recollection, for the same reason that induced him to paint it.

I have mentioned that I got rid of a palpitation of the heart, which accompanied my first visit to Italy, by riding on horseback. The palpitation was so strong and incessant, that I was forced for some nights, to sleep in a reclining posture, and expected sudden death; but when I began the horse-back, I soon found that the more I rode, and (I used to think) the harder I rode, the less the palpitation became. Galloping one day, up a sloping piece of ground, the horse suddenly came to a stand, by a chalk-pit, and I was agreeably surprised to find myself not only unprecipitated over his head (for though a decent, I was not a skilful rider), but in a state of singular calmness and self-possession—a right, proper, masculine state of nerves. I might have discovered, as I did afterwards, what it was that so calmed and strengthened me. I was of a temperament of body in which the pores were not easily opened; and the freer they were kept, the better I was; but it took me a long time to discover, that in order to be put into a state of vigour as well as composure, I required either vigorous exercise or some strong moral excitement connected with the sense of action. Unfortunately, I had a tendency to extremes in self-treatment. At one time I thought to cure myself by cold water baths, in which I persevered through a winter season; and, subsequently, I hurt myself by

hot baths. Late hours at night were not mended by lying in bed of a morning; nor incessant reading and writing, by weeks in which I did little but stroll and visit. It is true, I can hardly be said to have ever been without a book; for if not in my hand, it was at my side, or in my pocket; but what I needed was ordinary, regular habits, accompanied with a more than ordinary amount of exercise. I was never either so happy or so tranquil, as when I was in a state the most active. I could very well understand the character of an unknown individual, described in the prose works of Ben Jonson, who would sit writing, day and night till he fainted, and then so entirely give himself up to diversion, that people despaired of getting him to work again. But I sympathized still more with one of the Rucellai family, who was so devoted to a sedentary life, that he could not endure the thought of being taken from it; till being forced, in a manner, to accept a diplomatic mission, he became as vehement for a life of action as he had before been absorbed in indolence, and was never satisfied till he was driving everything before him, and spinning, with his chariot-wheels, from one court to another. If I had not a reverence, indeed, for whatever has taken place in the ordinance of things, great and small, I should often have fancied that some such business of diplomacy would

have been my proper vocation; for I delight in imagining conferences upon points that are to be carried, or scenes in which thrones are looked upon, and national compliments are to be conveyed; and I am sure that a great deal of action would have kept me in the finest health. Whatever dries up the surface of my body, intimidates me; but when the reverse has been effected by anything except the warm bath, fear has forsaken me, and my spirit has felt as broad and healthy as my shoulders.

I did not discover this particular cause of healthy sensation till long after my recovery. I attributed it entirely to exercise in general; but by exercise, at all events (and I mention the whole circumstance for the benefit of the nervous), health was restored to me; and I maintained it as long as I persevered in the means.

Not long after convalescence, the good that had been done me was put further to the test. Some friends, among whom were two of my brothers and myself, had a day's boating up the Thames. We were very merry and jovial, and not prepared to think any obstacle, in the way of our satisfaction, possible. On a sudden we perceive a line stretched across the river by some fishermen. We call out to them to lower, or take it away. They say they will not. One of us holds up a knife, and proclaims his

intention to cut it. The fishermen defy the knife. Forward goes the knife with the boat, and cuts the line in the most beautiful manner conceivable. The two halfs of the line rushed asunder.

"Off," cry the fishermen to one another, "and duck 'em." They push out their boat. Their wives (I forget whence they issued) appear on the bank, echoing the cry of "Duck 'em." We halt on our oars, and are come up with, the fishermen looking as savage as wild islanders, and swearing might and main. My brother and myself, not to let us all be run down (for the fishermen's boat was much larger than ours, and we had ladies with us, who were terrified) told the enemy we would come among them. We did so, going from our boat into theirs.

The determination to duck us now became manifest enough, and the fishermen's wives (cruel with their husbands' lost fishing) seemed equally determined not to let the intention remit. They screamed and yelled like so many furies. The fishermen seized my brother John, whom they took for the cutter of the line, and would have instantly effected their purpose, had he not been clasped round the waist by my brother Robert, who kept him tight down in a corner of the hold. A violent struggle ensued, during which a ruffianly fellow aiming a blow at my brother John's face, whose arms were

pinioned, I had the good luck to intercept it. Meanwhile the wives of the boaters were screaming as well as the wives of the fishermen; and it was asked our antagonists, whether it was befitting brave men to frighten women out of their senses.

The fury seemed to relax a little at this. The word "payment" was mentioned, which seemed to relax it more; but it was still divided between threat and demand, when, in the midst of a fresh outbreak of the first resolution, beautiful evidence was furnished of the magical effects of the word "law."

Luckily for our friends and ourselves (for the enemy had the advantage of us, both in strength and numbers), the owner of the boat, it seems, had lately been worsted in some action of trespass, probably of the very nature of what they had been doing with their line. I was then living with my brother S., who was in the law. I happened to be dressed in black; and I had gathered from some words which fell from them during their rage, that what they had been about with their fishing-net, was in all probability illegal. I assumed it to be so. I mentioned the dreaded word "law;" my black coat corroborated its impression;—and, to our equal relief and surprise, we found them on the sudden converting their rage and extortion into an

assumption that we meant to settle with their master, and quietly permitting us to get back to our friends.

Throughout this little rough adventure, which at one time threatened very distressing, if not serious consequences, I was glad to find that I underwent no apprehensions but such as became me. The pain and horror that used to be given me at sight of human antagonism never entered my head. I felt nothing but a flow of brotherhood and determination, and returned in fine breathing condition to the oar. I subsequently found that all corporate occasions of excitement affected me in the same healthy manner. The mere fact of being in a crowd when their feelings were strongly moved, to whatever purpose, roused all that was strong in me; and from the alacrity, and even comfort and joy, into which I was warmed by the thought of resistance to whatever wrong might demand it, I learned plainly enough what a formidable thing a human being might become if he took wrong for right, and what reverence was due to the training and just treatment of the myriads that compose a nation.

I was now again in a state of perfect comfort and enjoyment, the gayer for the cloud which had gone, though occasionally looking back on it with gravity, and prepared, alas! or rather preparing myself by

degrees to undergo it again in the course of a few years by relapsing into a sedentary life. Such as I might have done, I had not, it seems, suffered enough. However, the time was very delightful while it lasted. I thoroughly enjoyed my books, my walks, my companions, my verses; and I had never ceased to be ready to fall in love with the first tender-hearted damsel that should encourage me. Now it was a fair charmer, and now a brunette; now a girl who sang, or a girl who danced; now one that was merry, or was melancholy, or seemed to care for nothing, or for everything, or was a good friend, or good sister, or good daughter. With this last, who completed her conquest by reading verses better than I had ever yet heard, I ultimately became wedded for life; and she reads verses better than ever to this day, especially some that shall be nameless.

END OF VOL. I.

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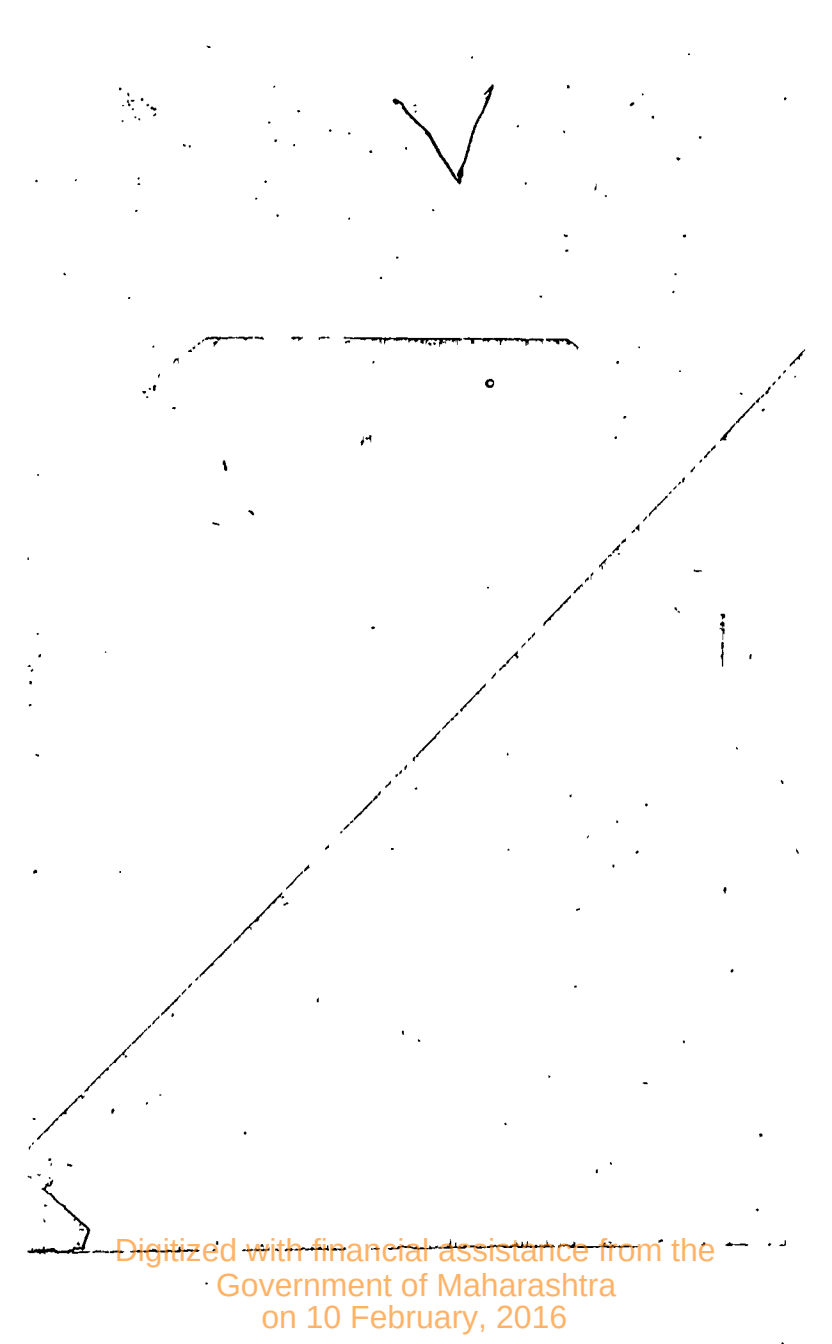

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